Curriculum Assessment Report
Design Program | Fall 2023

To meet the assessment requirements for Fall 2023, the Design Program performed an "indirect assessment" with an informal student feedback session focusing on the evaluation of our five Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs). The primary objectives were to gauge whether students' perceptions of their learning were aligned with our PLOs and to understand their comprehension of the PLOs.

Assessment Method:

Seniors were invited to an optional end-of-semester lunch, with a turnout of seven out of ten RSVPs. Three full-time faculty members, one part-time faculty member, and the Director of Assessment hosted/attended. A collaborative exercise using post-it notes was employed, encouraging students to jot down thoughts on their design classes. Subsequently, they shared and grouped these ideas, aiming to identify if they naturally correlated with the PLOs.

Results and Insights:

PLO 1: Apply skills to generate design work through methodologies of process, production, and experimentation.

Students associated this PLO with experimentation, revision, brainstorming, and peer feedback. It was seen as encapsulating the design process, from research to experimentation, emphasizing the distinction between design and fine art.

PLO 2: Synthesize design research and scholarship in history, theory and criticism.

Students placed an emphasis on research, critical thinking, and some confusion about the word "scholarship." The faculty clarified "scholarship" in the context of investigating and researching design as an intellectual endeavor.

PLO 3: Demonstrate fluency with diverse media and their accompanying technologies, along with the ability to accommodate new technologies as they emerge.

Students perceived this outcome as involving learning new programs, anticipating the future role of AI, and cultivating a flexible mindset. Exposure to various software, even without expertise, was valued.

PLO 4: Articulate the role of design and the function of the designer as a leader in the social, cultural, and political landscape.

Students linked this outcome to specific classes and instructors (Professor Sabiha Basria's "Design and Social Change" and Professor Noopur Agarwal's "Typography" for example), highlighting the impact of the seminar courses especially in solidifying the role of the designer in culture and society. The importance of culturally relevant design and the question of being a design leader versus participant were discussed amongst the students.

PLO 5: Engage in the practice of design professionalism and collaboration.

Students associated this outcome with peer review, critique, feedback, and the challenge of collaboration. Many expressed concerns about group projects, indicating a need for more emphasis on collaboration.

Reflections and Considerations:

- The event was fun and many faculty members and students came forth afterwards to acknowledge how much they appreciate being part of the process

- It was revealed through the students ideas and grouping of their ideas, that for the most part our PLOs are being achieved and are understood from a student perspective

- Acknowledging the small sample size, the possibility of making such feedback sessions mandatory during the Senior Design Projects course was considered for a broader representation.

- Consider doing student feedback sessions for freshman and then again once those students are seniors

- Consider incorporating more authentic collaborative projects into the curriculum. The question of whether collaboration skills could be acquired through internships or jobs was raised.

- During a closing Q+A session several students brought up wanting more lessons on Adobe Photoshop and one said they did not agree with learning p5.js in a required course. Faculty discussed a potential shift from teaching specific technologies to emphasizing adaptability and learning how to learn new technologies.

- The development of a "creative voice" was noted, along with suggestions for improvement in Photoshop skills.

[PHOTOS HERE](#)