

Design Annual Assessment Report AY21-2

Program Names and degree types

Design major

Design minor

(Note: we are submitting an aggregate report for both the major and minor.)

Names and contact information of faculty coordinating assessment

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Mission Statement

The mission statements are listed below. There have been no changes since the last report.

Design major: By combining a holistic approach to design with a passion for justice, students create stunning work that inspires change. Our program is built around the idea that today's designers must be able to work comfortably and effectively across a broad range of media — print, digital, interactive, product, information — with an eye toward the greater good. Our students in the Design Major develop the skills to independently and collaboratively design critical and thoughtful messages, interfaces, and public spaces.

Design minor: By combining a holistic approach to design with a passion for justice, students create stunning work that inspires change. Our program is built around the idea that today's designers must be able to work comfortably and effectively across a broad range of media — print, digital, interactive, product, information — with an eye toward the greater good. Our students in the Design Minor are introduced to the skills to independently and collaboratively design critical and thoughtful messages, interfaces, and public spaces.

PLOs

The PLOs are listed below. There have been no changes since the last report.

Design Major PLOs

1. Generate design work through methodologies of process, production, and experimentation.
2. Synthesize design research and scholarship in history, theory and criticism.
3. Demonstrate fluency with diverse medias and technologies, along with the ability to accommodate new technologies as they emerge.
4. Articulate the role of design and the function of the designer as a leader in the social, cultural, and political landscape.
5. Engage in the practice of design professionalism and collaboration.

Design Minor PLOs

1. Generate design work through methodologies of process, production, and experimentation.
2. Synthesize design research and scholarship in history, theory and criticism.
3. Demonstrate fluency with diverse medias and technologies, along with the ability to accommodate new technologies as they emerge.

Assessment schedule between APRs

See the spreadsheet image below of our assessment schedule, or view the live spreadsheet [here](#). We are due to assess PLO1 for the Design major and PLO3 for the Design minor, which is what is contained within this report. Upon completion of this assessment, we will have assessed every PLO for both the Design Major and the Minor within the APR cycle.

Each PLO must be assessed at least one time between each APR		2016 - APR year (no individual assessment)	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 - APR year in Spring (adjusted date for covid delays)
Design Major	PLO 1	Generate design work through methodologies of process, production, and experimentation.						Assessed with w			
	PLO 2	Synthesize design research and scholarship in history, theory and criticism.			Assessed with T						
	PLO 3	Demonstrate fluency with various medias and technologies, along with the ability to accommodate new technologies as they emerge.		Assessed with V							
	PLO 4	Articulate the role of design and the function of the designer as a leader in the social, cultural, and political landscape.		Assessed with W							
	PLO 5	Engage in the practice of design professionalism and collaboration.	Assessed with w								
Design Minor	PLO 1	Generate design work through methodologies of process, production, and experimentation.	Assessed with fir								
	PLO 2	Synthesize design research and scholarship in history, theory and criticism.		Assessed with fir							
	PLO 3	Demonstrate fluency with various medias and technologies, along with the ability to accommodate new technologies as they emerge.						Assessed with V			
						<alternative report due to COVID>	Year of Reflection report				

Discussion of feedback from previous year's report

Last year we engaged in a “year of reflection”, offering a few ideas of areas for growth within our program. Feedback helpfully suggested the following:

- **Support for the development of a minor in UI/UX as demanded by the industry.** Our program is currently discussing this potential new development with colleagues in the Computer Science department.
- **Caution against adding an honors track that only adds breadth, without depth.** This feedback has been very valuable to us, and we are considering our next steps. Currently our energies are directed towards a new minor, renaming or re-structuring some of our courses to more accurately represent them to incoming students, and the potential to develop a graduate program with the encouragement of the Dean and Provost.
- **Reminder that we have some flexibility for a “portfolio” course if we would like to develop it, in terms of units.** We are grateful for this context, as well as the context that we can increase the number of units of the major without making it too difficult for our students to graduate.

We would like to thank Prof. Alexandra Amati once again for the thorough review and feedback, which makes this process more generative and growth-oriented for our program, faculty, and students.

Design Major Assessment

1. Description of assessment methodology:

The Design major has assessed **PLO1: Generate design work through methodologies of process, production, and experimentation**. In order to assess PLO 1, two full-time faculty members in our program evaluated student projects produced in Spring 2022 in our *Senior Design Projects ART 460* course. *Senior Design Projects* is an upper-division capstone course that requires students to work on one self-initiated thesis project for the entirety of the semester. For the sake of assessment, both of the evaluating professors were not involved in teaching the course nor did they direct the project work. The student projects from the course were first collected and then sorted so that each project could be evaluated at every developmental milestone throughout the semester leading up to the final outcome. Students produce work sorted into five milestones for this course, with the fifth milestone being the ultimate thesis itself. We looked at work from Milestone 1 (the first ideation phase) and Milestone 4 (the penultimate process-focused marker of the thesis projects)

2. Rubrics (or any other instruments used, if applicable):

We used a rubric that considered three criteria for **PLO1: Generate design work through methodologies of process, production, and experimentation—**

1. **PROCESS:** Did student design work demonstrate the ability to iterate over time, incorporating feedback and research? (For this category we evaluated where each project was at milestone 1 and then again at milestone 4.)
2. **PRODUCTION:** Did student work demonstrate skilled use of designed elements appropriate to the medium of choice, including type, image-making, color, craft & composition (For this category we evaluated the final outcome of each project at milestone 4.)
3. **EXPERIMENTATION:** Did student work demonstrate experimentation of form and/or concept? (For this category we evaluated the final outcome of each project at milestone 4.)

We evaluated each project separately, and the scores were averaged. Students were rated on a scale of 4-1: 4= excellent, 3 = good, 2 = fair, 1 = poor.

3. Description of results, noting any significant findings from the data or assessment process:

In total 22 student projects were fully assessed. Based on our evaluating criteria students scored an average of about:

- PROCESS: 3.6 in their ability to iterate over time, incorporating feedback and research (criteria 1)
- PRODUCTION: 3.5 in their ability to use designed elements appropriate to the medium of choice, including type, image-making, color, craft & composition (criteria 2)
- EXPERIMENTATION: 3.8 in their ability to experiment with form and/or concept (criteria 3)

These results signify that our students are reaching a “good” almost “excellent” level of proficiency with PLO 1. Our students seem to be most skilled at experimenting with form and concept. However, our students’ production skills (the ability to combine such things as type, image, color, craft & composition) needs the most improvement. We infer that perhaps the lack of excellence in the production of work might be a direct result of time lost in the lab due to remote learning, as these students experienced their formative production years during the 1.5 years of COVID-related pandemic shutdowns. Many of these students spent their junior year taking studio courses that teach production skills using equipment in our labs online (remotely), with minimal access to things such as printers, cutters, and scanners. Therefore, it makes sense to us that their production skills might lag slightly behind their process and experimentation, even though they remain highly marked.

4. Description of how the results were shared with faculty and how your department/program responded to the results. This is where you should lay out any plans for future improvement or assessment of your program indicated by the results

The results were shared and discussed at our monthly Design Program meeting on Oct 7. Consensus among Design faculty was that the results of this assessment were overwhelmingly positive. We therefore focused on the “weakest link” in the assessment, namely the students’ production of design work.

The faculty agreed that the relative weakness in production was likely due to the pandemic, in which these students did not have access to the production resources of our department because of the remote learning environment. Nevertheless, we agreed that there may be two

possibilities to enhance production skills for design majors in our program, especially those in the last year of their major:

1. **Space / Resources:** Students would benefit from access to a critique or “pin-up” space, in which they can prototype exhibition layouts and tactics before finalizing their thesis work in an external exhibition space. Students would also benefit from increased production resources in our department, as students often outsource production or attempt to find resources outside the department for printing, laser cutting, book binding, etc.
2. **Joint critiques for senior design students for thesis work:** Faculty felt that students would benefit for an interim critique with full-time faculty in our program (not solely with the instructor of the thesis course), as each faculty member has expertise in a different area of design research and production. Such a joint-critique may also help students adhere to production deadlines more seriously.

Design Minor Assessment

The Design major has assessed PLO3: Demonstrate fluency with various medias and technologies, along with the ability to accommodate new technologies as they emerge.

Student work assessed:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1LZ_KQN1jL12cFXuJmcoJUePwkhp6aXoGyU4BikonDhU/edit?usp=sharing

1. Description of assessment methodology:

Professors Carrie Hott and Stuart McKee developed a new set of rubrics that applies specifically to students taking the VCII course, whether majors or minors. This rubric was based on demonstration of basic web development skills and developing assets for the web, and on the ability to create a polished multimedia project through the deployment of these skills.

2. Rubrics (or any other instruments used, if applicable):

1- Student demonstrates rudimentary skills in basic web development (basic HTML & CSS)

(Poor)

2- Student demonstrates rudimentary skills in developing assets for the web (creating images, graphics, logos or other original assets)

(Average)

3- Student creates a polished, cohesive multi-media project that demonstrates use of form, style, and technique through digital media

(Good)

4- Student creates a polished, cohesive multi-media project that incorporates at least two technologies or media into one project (e.g. web development and original assets)

(Excellent)

We evaluated each project separately, and the scores were averaged. Students were rated on a scale of 4-1: 4= excellent, 3 = good, 2 = average, 1 = poor.

3. Description of results, noting any significant findings from the data or assessment process:

Six out of eight students demonstrated full capacity, reaching level four (Excellent). One student was functionally poor, reaching only level one (Poor), and one student was functionally average,

reaching only level two (Average). Work was not available for two other students taking the course.

Overall, minor students in VCII are meeting program expectations convincingly and with polish. 75% are developing polished websites and mastering multiple technologies, and are able to incorporate multimedia approaches into one finished project.

4. Description of how the results were shared with faculty and how your department/program responded to the results. This is where you should lay out any plans for future improvement or assessment of your program indicated by the results

The results were shared and discussed at our monthly Design Program meeting on Oct 7. After sharing the results, we agreed that the work assessed shows that we are meeting this learning outcome, and that student work demonstrates positive outcomes in relation to 'demonstrating fluency with various media and technologies, along with the ability to accommodate new technologies as they emerge.'

After this determination, we discussed four important points pertinent to this assessment process, and what should be considered going forward:

- The rubric for this Design Minor PLO was developed specifically for work completed in Visual Communication II. In the future, this rubric system will need to be revised for use with other courses.
- It may benefit future Visual Communication II courses to focus more specifically on the incorporation of print work with web projects, within the scope of one or more projects.
- In cases where students show weaker skills in the development of images and other assets and materials, it is possible that this may reflect a student's lack of experience from the previous Visual Communication I course.
- The rubric developed did not map evenly onto student work. Specifically, in the case of two projects, one student showed skill in developing assets (images and other graphics or the web), but did not demonstrate fully functional skills in web development (HTML/CSS). And for one other student, their web development skills were evident, but it was not clear that they produced original content (images and other graphics or the web).