**Art History Major Assessment**

**Mission:**

The art history program at Albion College provides students with a foundation in the skills of analysis, critical thinking and writing, and knowledge of art in its artistic, historical and cultural contexts. We educate students in both traditional and innovative modes of artistic expression and critique. We believe that individual expression in the form of artistic creation, analysis and dialogue is essential to the maintenance of human life and the creation of a humane and just society.

**Art History graduates (majors) will:**

speak and write effectively about works of art using the languages and methods of art and art history

be knowledgeable about art across a spectrum of historical periods and distinguish between historically specific styles

critique and explain art works in their appropriate context

be knowledgeable about issues in contemporary art

use contemporary critical theory to interpret works of art.

formulate appropriate questions for research and conduct independent research

understand the connections between artistic expression and the formation of a just society

be familiar with area-specific materials and techniques in at least one area of the studio arts.

**Pre-enrollment Assessment**

A small group of students participate in a written portfolio review and interview in the spring prior to their enrollment at the College. These students usually receive Art and Art History Scholarships. As a group they can be tracked throughout the time they hold the scholarship, which is usually four years.

At the time of the scholarship portfolio review we will assess students on the following:

Art History students at the beginning level will understand and use beginning vocabulary of art history.

Art History students at the beginning level will be able to critique and explain art works in an artistic context.

**Baseline Assessment:**

Students will be evaluated at the time they take ARTH110: Non-Western Art; ARTH111: Art History Before 1400; or ARTH112: Art History After 1400. All majors in art or art history must take one of these survey classes. Scholarship students are integrated into these classes and their performance can be compared with other students. Quizzes early in the term or embedded questions on the first exam will measure each student’s ability to use specific languages about art, to interpret and analyze works of art and to distinguish historically specific styles and expressions. A second marker will be embedded in the final exam.

**At the 100/beginning level the following learning objectives will be measured:**

Art History students at the beginning level will be able to talk and write about art using appropriate vocabulary.

Art History 100 level students will be able to distinguish between historically specific artistic styles and expressions.

**Art History majors at the 200/intermediate level will:**

understand and use the specific languages of art and art history. They will be able to discuss meanings of various works of art using appropriate language in oral presentations to their peers.

will talk and write about art using a more sophisticated vocabulary than beginning students.

distinguish between historically specific artistic styles and expressions, and will place the works within a social, cultural, and historical context

be knowledgeable about issues in contemporary art

In art history classes at the 200/intermediate level oral presentations and additional writing assignments will allow us to continue to evaluate the student’s progress. Students will meet regularly with the art historians to discuss their progress through the program and future plans. All art history majors must take ARTH 216: Modern and Contemporary Art, so this is the logical place to assess all of them. We will use a modified form of the writing rubric developed for the First Year Seminars as a standard to judge writing at the 200 levels.

**Art History Junior Review**

During his or her junior year each art history major will undergo a Junior Review. They will select or be assigned a short art historical article that they will summarize and analyze for departmental faculty. After their presentation they will engage in an informal dialogue with faculty about the article. Students will be judged according to a set of criteria mapped out on a rubric.

**Art History majors at the 300/advanced level will:**

understand and use the specific languages of art history. They will be able to discuss meanings of works of art using appropriate language in oral and visual presentations to their peers.

talk and write about art effectively, using a more sophisticated vocabulary than intermediate students.

distinguish between historically specific artistic styles and expressions, and will be able to place the works within a social, cultural, and historical context.

use contemporary critical theory to interpret works of art

understand the connections between artistic expression and the formation of a just society

be familiar with area-specific materials and techniques in at least one area of the studio arts

Students will be assessed in one of the 300 level courses: Art as Political Action; Race and Representation in American Art; Women in Art; Earth, Art, and Environment. We will continue to use rubrics to judge their performance. An essay at the end of the semester will also be used to assess these learning objectives.

Familiarity of one area of studio art will be assessed by performance in a studio class.

**Capstone**

In the spring of their senior year all art history majors will participate in a symposium in which they will present to the faculty and their peers a significant art historical research project. Projects may include research for a particular class, a directed study, or an Honors or Departmental Honors thesis. Those who are not presenting will listen critically and will be expected to engage in dialogue about the ideas the speaker presented after the presentation. The text of their presentation will be turned in to be assessed using a rubric.