

Assessment Plans for MFA in Creative Inquiry, Interdisciplinary Arts (CIA) and MFA in Writing and Consciousness (WRC)

MFA in Creative Inquiry, Interdisciplinary Arts

The MFA programs at CIIS began in Fall 2009 and in the past four years we have focused on designing, implementing, and completing an assessment cycle.

Design

Based on our student learning outcomes, we've designed two sets of rubrics to assess students—(1) MFA Project Proposal Rubric, which provides an assessment of students' MFA project proposals, completed at the end of the first year. 2) MFA Project Rubric, which provides an assessment of students' final projects. Faculty members and outside reviewers complete the rubrics at the end of spring semester in the second year. We have successfully revised and used the proposal rubric since 2010 and the MFA project rubric since 2011 (the first time we had a second-year class).

Implementation

MFA Project Proposal: Since 2010, we have used the following process: (1) At the end of the first semester, MFA students are provided the MFA Project Proposal Guidelines, the MFA Project Proposal Rubric and MFA Project Rubric. Students are provided the MFA Project Rubric, even though it is not used until the second year, so that as they develop their proposals they are aware of the categories used for assessment. (2) Early in spring semester, faculty members overview the proposal process, guidelines and the rubrics. (3) Students develop their MFA project proposals in CIA 7093: MFA Interdisciplinary Arts Workshop II. In March of each year, students turn in their final draft of their MFA project to the class and to the department. (2) The faculty member teaching CIA 7093 and the Department Chair review the proposals and complete a rubric for each project. (3) Department members review the rubrics and determine which proposals are "suitable/acceptable" and which, if any, need additional work. Also, the Department assigns faculty advisors, based on student requests, and advisors meet with students to review the proposals and require revisions, if needed. Proposals needing additional work are reviewed again by the faculty advisor and department chair.

MFA Project: Since 2011, we have used the following process: (1) Students work with a faculty advisor on development of their MFA project in fall term. Before the final weekend meeting of fall term, the faculty advisor, in consultation with the student, selects an outside reviewer for the MFA project. (2) Faculty advisors meet one-on-one with students throughout fall and spring term, and the outside reviewer meets once with the student before the end of fall term and once early in spring semester for a work-in-progress meeting. (3) Students present their MFA projects through performance, exhibit, or manuscript in April of each year—and the faculty advisor and outside reviewer complete rubrics for each project. (4) Once projects are assessed, faculty advisors review the rubrics with the students. Outside reviewers are available to discuss their rubrics with students or to meet with them. Copies of the rubric are sent to the student and are kept by the department.

Assessment Cycle

In the past four years, we have been working on completing an assessment cycle. We began by creating outcomes, maps and rubrics for assessment and then began the process of using them each year. In 2011, we prepared an extensive assessment report and held a meeting of core faculty, project advisors and outside reviewers to assess our use of the rubrics. We raised questions and resolved to revise the MFA Project Proposal Rubric to make it simpler and more relevant to the project proposals. Since 2012 and for the past two years we have used the new (one-page) rubric. Our first report emphasized the data that came from our first completion of the assessment cycle and questions raised by our assessment processes. In summer 2013, we'll complete our second extensive report, which will emphasize our current use of the rubrics and aggregation of data from our first three years. In Fall 2013, we plan to our second meeting of core faculty, project advisors and outside reviewers.

Also, as part of our assessment plan, we have on-going curriculum discussion as part of our faculty meetings. We are in on-going conversation about updates and potential revisions to our curriculum and invite faculty members (including adjuncts) to meetings to discuss courses they teach so that all core faculty members get deeper understanding of the curriculum.

We'll continue to use rubrics each years, prepare extensive reports every other year, and conduct meetings with faculty members, project advisors, and outside reviewers in the fall semester.

Timeline:

- Rubrics completed spring semester each year and review of completed rubrics by faculty members
- Extensive report every other year (2011, 2013, 2015)
- Assessment updates (each year, beginning 2014)
- Assessment meetings for faculty members and outside reviewers (Fall semesters, 2011, 2013, 2015)

MFA in Writing and Consciousness

The MFA programs at CIIS began in Fall 2009 and in the past four years we have focused on designing, implementing, and completing an assessment cycle.

Design

Based on our student learning outcomes, we've designed two sets of rubrics to assess students—(1) MFA Project Proposal Rubric, which provides an assessment of students' MFA project proposals, completed at the end of the first year. 2) MFA Project Rubric, which provides an assessment of students' final projects. Faculty members and outside reviewers complete the rubrics at the end of spring semester in the second year. We have successfully revised and used the proposal rubric since 2010 and the MFA project rubric since 2011 (the first time we had a second-year class).

Implementation

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