

## School of Art 2012 Strategic Plan

### Preface

#### About the School of Art

Since 1983 the University of Tennessee's programs in Art have been accredited by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD). This accreditation was recently renewed in 2011 for a term of ten years. In 2001 the Department of Art became the School of Art, drawing this academic unit into alignment with the School of Music, identifying the distinct enterprise in the College of Arts and Sciences, and honoring the unique challenge of its faculty to train students in the study of Art and Design as well as in the study of the histories of these disciplines.

Currently, the U.S. News & World Report rankings (2012) identify the graduate program in the School of Art (M.F.A. in Studio Art) as tied at 17<sup>th</sup> among public universities, along with the University of Arizona, Indiana University-Bloomington, University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, and the University of California-Berkeley. In this same poll, our graduate program in Printmaking is ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> nationally, behind Rhode Island School of Design and the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

At this time the faculty of the School of Art is composed of 26 tenured and tenure-track faculty; in addition, each semester there is one full-time Artist-in-Residence in Painting and Drawing. All faculty teach at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. The current census of students in the School of Art indicates that there are approximately 350 undergraduate students working towards the following degrees in Studio Art (B.A. and B.F.A.); Graphic Design (B.F.A.); Art History (B.A.). The graduate population hovers around 40 students who are

working on a three-year terminal Masters of Fine Arts. In addition to serving these students, the School of Art participates in the University's General Education curriculum and in the curriculum of the College of Arts and Sciences. The Office of the Provost and the College of Arts and Sciences augment instructional efforts by providing supplementary funding each year for one or two positions for Lecturers. In addition, the Office of the Chancellor has generously supported the on-going success of the UT Downtown Gallery, a professional gallery with a series of changing exhibitions, and of the student-run Gallery 1010. These are key resources supporting graduate and undergraduate research and creative activity and community outreach.

#### About the School of Art Strategic Plan

The School of Art Strategic Plan conforms to the templates of the University's VOL Vision Plan and the College's Plan in that it is organized around the institution's five strategic priorities. The formatting of the School of Art Strategic Plan includes summaries of the goals and objectives of the VOL Vision Plan and of the College Plan as reminders of the roles of these larger entities to support the planning and operations of the smaller academic units.

In the context of our work to identify the contributions of the School of Art to the University and College missions we worked to delineate what the School is capable of accomplishing, and we relied on the success of the University and College to execute larger initiatives. For example, in the case of Goal IV that focuses on the University's Faculty (pp. 7-8), the faculty formulated the School's objectives under this goal, trusting the University to "address current gaps in faculty salaries and benefits" and the College to "increase the number of tenure-line faculty." Since salaries, benefits, and raises are entirely

outside the purview of the School of Art, we chose not to identify objectives that focus on these topics; rather, we focus on the composition of the faculty and support for research and creative activity.

The 2008 Strategic Plan of the School of Art was the first such plan in the history of the School. In many ways this earlier plan was thematic and focused on goals and objectives that could be accomplished for the most part without the infusion of new revenue. The College has generously supported work based on this plan over the last four years with the award of five tenure-track lines (one new, four renewed) and with College investment in infrastructure to ensure NASAD reaccreditation.

By comparison the 2012 School of Art Strategic Plan is an action plan. Although the Plan does not include all of the

details of implementation, many of these have been identified already. In the coming year implementation plans for each goal and objective will be fleshed out and priorities will be assigned for the work to achieve each goal. This spring we began the task of projecting our actions on a timeline that spans five, ten, and more than ten, years. The goals over longer timeframes will require new investments in, and commitments to, the School of Art, and indeed beyond, to the Arts at U.T. As detailed in the Strategic Plan, we are eager to embrace interdisciplinary work with colleagues and students in the School of Music and in the Department of Theatre by trialing collaborations in the short term in order to secure the University's long-term investment and commitment. Moreover, the School of Art Strategic Plan assumes a new and larger case for targeted development efforts.

## **Vol Vision – Top 25 Action Plan**

### **Plan Priority - Undergraduate Education**

- Improve graduation and retention rates
- Improve operational effectiveness and student support
- Develop new programs
- Revise policies

### **College of Arts & Sciences Strategic Plan**

Goal I. Provide diverse undergraduate population with an excellent education

- Increase quality of undergraduate instruction by College faculty
- Ensure that College curriculum showcases and support the College's educational objectives
- Increase the amount of in-class contact between students and tenure-line faculty
- Improve graduate rates of undergraduates in the College
- Foster interdisciplinary learning and independent inquiry and scholarship and creative activity by undergraduate students

## School of Art Plan Priorities – Undergraduate Education

Goal I: Provide diverse undergraduate student body with an excellent education in Studio Art, Design and Art History

A. Institute logistical strategies to support students, monitor progress, identify problems, and celebrate successes

1. Track student progress through curricula in each degree beyond University and College efforts and within the School of Art.
2. Improve data collection to learn more about ideal size of School of Art in terms of undergraduate population.
3. Work to solve bottlenecks within the School of Art—e.g., non-western art history; Drawing 211—as well as within concentrations and degrees—e.g., Drawing 212 and Drawing 311; Art History 375 and 402.
4. Continue to improve advising (academic, professional student research, career) to reinforce efforts to promote 4-year graduation rate.
5. Establish an annual schedule of informational meetings for undergraduates—either School-wide or by area.
6. Focus on high-school recruitment by developing and expanding current strategies.
7. Publicize and showcase undergraduate student achievements.

B. Heighten the quality of undergraduate educational experience in the School of Art

1. Focus on refining School of Art curricula for all degrees in order to enrich student experience in new and exciting ways.
2. Add opportunities broadly—within courses, within curriculum, and extra-curricularly.
3. Continue to encourage and support directed undergraduate research and creative activity.
4. Maintain and grow commitment to General Education and College curriculum for the non-Art student population.
5. Maintain strong commitment of faculty to teach in lower-division courses to maximize exposure of undergraduates to the tenure-line faculty.
6. Establish departmental Honors Program for strongest students in each degree program.
7. Explore our relationship with Art Education by establishing a joint task force.

## **Vol Vision – Top 25 Action Plan**

### **Plan Priority - Graduate Education**

- Future growth – increase enrollments
- Improve recruitment
- Increase student financial support
- Increase operational effectiveness

### **College of Arts & Sciences Strategic Plan**

Goal II. Recruit well-prepared graduate students from diverse backgrounds, and educate and mentor them effectively by preparing them to launch successful professional careers

- Increase quality of entering students
- Increase the number of terminal degrees awarded

## School of Art Plan Priorities – Graduate Education

Goal II: Recruit well-prepared graduate students from diverse backgrounds, educate and mentor them effectively to launch successful professional careers in Studio Art and Design

A. Future Students: Recruit, and enroll students from the best and largest pool of diverse applicants possible

1. Increase the monetary amount of graduate stipends and the number of fee waivers available.
2. Study the ideal size of the graduate program relative to available funding, faculty size and distribution by area, available resources, job market, etc
3. Make recruiting overtures to strong undergraduate programs.
4. Feature the Foundations teaching training and teaching experience as special aspects of graduate training in the School of Art, since these increases options for academic job placement.
5. Recruit students with stronger academic skills.

B. Current Students: Focus on current graduate population

1. Improve studio conditions—consider consolidation, other possible groupings to promote cross-disciplinary work and influence.
2. Sustain ranked program in Printmaking and target additional programs with an eye to moving these up in disciplinary rankings to a top 10 position—Painting and Drawing is an especially strong prospect based on reputation of program and high visibility of AIR; 4D/Design program offers significant opportunities to carve out a unique program; 3D has an opportunity to redefine their program as a result of combining ceramics and sculpture.
3. Showcase creative work of graduate students.
4. Review mechanisms to increase rigor of M.F.A. program.
5. Establish Creative Arts Research Center to include a graduate learning space, to promote interdisciplinary research within the School, within the Arts Division, within the College and beyond.
6. Establish connections between graduate students and alumni to encourage professional mentoring.
7. Plan carefully in developing the graduate timetable of courses to optimize crossover enrollment.

C. Alumni: Support M.F.A. alumni in their professional careers

1. Develop an aspect of the website as a platform for alumni resources—residencies, internships, non-academic positions.
2. Establish an alumni e-mail listserv.
3. Continue to tap higher-profile alumni to return to campus as jurors, visiting artists, exhibiting artists.
4. Build an alumni network with an eye to development opportunities.
5. Include alumni in School Advisory Board.

## **Vol Vision – Top 25 Action Plan**

### **Plan Priority – Research**

- Strengthen the foundation for strategic growth
- Develop and continue to develop necessary infrastructure
- Develop and continue to develop necessary support
- Develop and continue to develop necessary processes

## **College of Arts & Sciences Strategic Plan**

Goal III. Promote, support, and reward faculty excellence in scholarship and creative activity

- Increase external funding for research, scholarship, and creative activity, especially from Federal agencies and private foundations
- Enhance the quantity, quality, and visibility of faculty scholarship and creative activity

## School of Art Plan Priorities – Research and Creative Activity

Goal III. Promote, support, and reward excellence in the scholarship and creative activity produced by faculty in the School of Art

A. Work to establish a research culture and to identify our values as artists, designers and scholars

1. Work to increase the amount of time that faculty have to dedicate to scholarship and creative activity.
2. Make opportunities for research and creative activity.

B. Support faculty contributions in scholarship and creative activity to contribute to the College and University research mission

1. Increase funding in support of faculty scholarship and creative activity.
2. Increase number of applications for external funding and consider tying these to conditions for internal awards (following Chancellor's Grants model).
3. Establish stronger connections with Office of Research.

C. Launch a Creative Arts Research Center as an incubation center for creative ideas and problem solving

1. Build on the explorations of the current Organized Research Unit of faculty in 4D and design.
2. Weigh the potential role of Letter Press and Book Arts (Center for the Book) in the Creative Arts Research Center.
3. Promote research interactions with faculty and graduate students in other disciplines and colleges.
4. Explore the potential of this Center to expand faculty research productivity as well as external (even federal) funding to finance RAs and GRAs.
5. Develop the Center as a site for Summer Research Programs—nationally competitive residencies for visiting faculty and graduate students; investigate models such as Design Inquiry and Public Art Institute.

D. Work to establish metrics and collect data to document performance of faculty in scholarly research and creative activity

1. Collect data documenting collective faculty achievements in research and creative activities, refine the metrics for this, and prepare this as an annual profile, over a 2-year span, and over a 5-year span.
2. Establish Publicity Committee or a Publicity Officer to promote the many accomplishments of the faculty, within the University, locally, regionally and nationally.



## **Vol Vision – Top 25 Action Plan**

### **Plan Priority – Faculty**

- Address current gaps in faculty salaries and benefits
- Improve faculty professional development, support and satisfaction

## **College of Arts & Sciences Strategic Plan**

Goal IV. Continue to build, support, and retain a world-class faculty and staff

- Increase the number of tenure-line faculty in the College and improve recruitment and retention
- Further diversify the College's tenure-line faculty
- Support continuous professional development of tenure-line faculty
- Recruit and retain a diverse cohort of high-quality lecturers
- Enhance quality of staff working within the College

## School of Art Plan Priorities – Faculty

Goal IV. Continue to build, support and retain a world-class and diverse faculty in the School of Art

A. Recruit and retain stellar faculty in all areas of the School

1. Continue to diversify candidate pools when searching for new faculty members and to participate in the College Target of Opportunity hiring program.
2. Improve mentoring of tenure-stream faculty in teaching, research and creative activity, and service.
3. Support research and creative activities for all faculty, at all ranks.

B. Make strategic choices in requesting new tenure-line faculty positions

1. Focus on new faculty positions in areas that will allow us to gain an increasingly competitive edge in the national rankings of graduate programs in Studio Art and Design.
2. Focus upcoming and annual RFPs for new faculty lines in the following ways:
  - Maintain at least two faculty members in each graduate concentration.
  - Seek positions that benefit the entire School of Art.
  - Focus new hires on candidates who can bridge areas and review advantages of positions shared between areas.
  - Explore flexible term appointments for positions such as an all-School A.I.R./D.I.R. that rotates among areas; a critical theorist to promote the teaching of current thinking in a rapidly changing field.
3. Continue planning development campaign to endow Artist-in-Residence in Painting and Drawing (\$1 million goal).

C. Increase and improve faculty productivity by expanding support for creative activity and research (see also Goal III)

1. Increase support within the School of Art for faculty travel—both to present work in professional settings and to generate new research and creative activity.
2. Revisit gift agreements for current endowments with an eye to expanding faculty support (e.g., Berry, Cleaver endowments).
3. Study models for faculty course releases—e.g., Chancellor’s Grants; course release programs in other departments in the College, as for example in English.
4. Foster submission of more external proposals for grants and fellowships.
5. Focus development work on establishing new endowed sources of funding (Board of Advisors).

D. Explore faculty and area partnerships with School of Music and Department of Theatre as well as other related disciplines within and beyond the College

E. Sustain high-level of faculty commitment to community outreach and service

## **Vol Vision – Top 25 Action Plan**

### **Plan Priority - Infrastructure and Resources**

- Continually improve the resource base to achieve campus priorities
- Carefully balance state revenues, tuition and private funding
- Embrace stewardship of campus infrastructure
- Establish a culture that values sustainability

## **College of Arts & Sciences Strategic Plan**

Goal V. Increase the resource base that the College has available to accomplish its goals

- Advocate for increases in the College’s base budget
- Build relationships with alumni and other external stakeholders and Communicate College successes, priorities, and goals to these audiences
- Supplement the College base budget with additional funds that will allow the College to accomplish its strategic goals

## School of Art Plan Priorities – Infrastructure and Resources

Goal V. Work to improve the infrastructure and resources assigned to the School of Art for instruction, research, and outreach activities

A. Focus on improving the quality of space available to all constituents in the School of Art

1. Establish a unified complex of graduate studios to accommodate graduate students with appropriate space that will also foster a professional culture as well as interactions between graduate students working in different media (see Goal II.B.1).
2. Establish a School-wide consolidated Media Pool / Resource Center with a full-time manager.
3. Renovate and repurpose space to meet instructional needs in every area that will furnish, for example, clean space for critiques; a common lighting studio for photographing work; a seminar room for Art History; a dedicated digital classroom for Design and 4D; an exhibition study gallery to support classroom work with original works of art and materials for extended assignments.
4. Partner with OIT to establish a state-of-the-art, all-School Technology Lab, managed by a full-time staff member and providing imaging and modeling printers; high-end software for production of various media; and a refresh program to maintain the equipment and update the software.
5. Renovate the Ewing Gallery of Art and Architecture, including the installation of new walls and a new lighting system.
6. Secure permanent UT Downtown Gallery and Gallery 1010 locations, both currently located in rented spaces (see Goal I.B.3).

B. Redefine and add staff positions to better accommodate the current needs of the School of Art

1. Establish an all-School technician to assist in the maintenance, repair, and support of all studio areas.
2. Establish a technology specialist to assist with technology needs in all areas.
3. Consider the establishment of additional staff lines—a School of Art advisor to assist undergraduate students; a publicist to shepherd public and media relations and maintain the School of Art website.

C. Assess equipment needs in the School of Art

1. Study the needs of each area for equipment to support instruction and to support faculty and graduate student creative activity and research.
2. Review the most appropriate channels to apply for College and University support for these needs.
3. Prioritize equipment needs and establish a schedule for planned expenditures to maintain and replace worn equipment.

D. Explore development opportunities that seem particularly well-matched with these needs

1. Explore potential donors to Design and 4D—local industry in media and distribution of media products.
2. Review external funding opportunities to support renovation of the Ewing Gallery and stabilization of the UT Downtown Gallery and Gallery 1010.