

Strategy: Global Learning Initiative

College of Arts and Letters

School of Art

Pam Stephens and Debra Edgerton

Introduction

The Global Learning Initiative seamlessly weaves itself through the School of Art; indeed, the visual arts themselves provide a model of global learning. The visual arts offer abundant opportunities for meeting the demands of educating in an ecologically sound and ethnically and culturally diverse 21st-century post-secondary environment.

Participating in the Northern Arizona University Global Learning Initiative enables the faculty of the School of Art to make public what they have long held private: that the arts are a core subject that teaches sustainability and tolerance. Beyond these important issues, the visual arts offer a rigorous and sequential curriculum that promotes critical thinking skills that readily transfer across the curriculum and into the lives of students. Graduates of the School of Art become global citizens who contribute in significant, if not understated ways.

On July 15, 2010, the six professional arts education associations released the *21st-Century Skills Maps for the Arts* (www.naea-reston.org). This document demonstrates how the arts significantly contribute to the development of the skills of

- Critical thinking and problem solving,
- Communication,
- Collaboration,
- Creativity,
- Innovation,
- Information literacy,
- Flexibility and adaptability,
- Initiative and self-direction,
- Social and cross-cultural expertise,
- Productivity and accountability,
- Leadership and responsibility.

The following, derived from the skills map document, outlines what the faculty of the School of Art holds to be true:

1 The arts provide opportunities and experiences for students to understand global issues; to work collaboratively with individuals representing diverse cultures, religions and lifestyles in a spirit of mutual respect; and to understand other nations and cultures, including those that shape their thoughts in other languages.

2 Study in the arts provides a context for exploring the rights and obligations of citizenship at the local, state, national and global levels as well as the implications of civic decisions. Students who study the arts must be aware of policies and laws affecting the creation and performance of their art forms (notably, laws regarding intellectual property) as well as understanding how local and global issues are influenced by the arts. More broadly, students in the arts learn the self-control and sophisticated communications skills necessary to work toward producing artistic products alone or in fruitful cooperation with a group of peers.

3 Arts students must be stewards of the earth and utilize appropriate practices with reusing and recycling materials when creating or performing various art forms. Students may also explore environmental issues and consequences through dances, compositions, productions or artworks portraying the use or misuse of natural resources.

Intended Learning Outcomes of the School of Art

Art education, interior design, and studio art students will demonstrate characteristics of global citizens as they apply a world view to their personal and artistic lives. The intended learning outcomes of the programs of the School of Art include deeply embedded concepts related to global learning.

Global Engagement

Students will

- 1 Use civil discourse, both written and spoken, to effectively express personal ideas and to interpret the ideas of others.
- 2 Show a commitment to open-minded inquiry and analysis (i.e., flexible and adaptable).
- 3 Demonstrate entry-level reading, speaking, and/or writing proficiency in one or more foreign languages.
- 4 Solve problems in conventional and non-conventional ways through reasoning and critical reflection.
- 5 Demonstrate competencies as an entry-level arts worker to solve problems that benefit the larger community.
- 6 Use visual iconography as a fundamental form of communication to connect a diverse international community.

Environmental Sustainability

Students will

- 1 Identify environmental issues
- 2 Work towards satisfactory resolutions in order to act as responsible stewards of the environment.

Diversity

Students will

- 1 Collaborate with others (socially and culturally different partners or teams) to share and accept responsibilities, make respectful compromises, and resolve differences to achieve shared goals
- 2 Evaluate written, spoken, and visual information from a variety of times and places to better understand diverse cultures, beliefs, and behaviors

Enduring Program Understandings

At the completion of the selected course of study in the School of Art, students will understand that

1. An awareness and empathy that come from art production or the study of art can enable a global point of view;
2. Civil discourse, valuing others, and competency in art education, interior design, or studio art requires open-minded and flexible thinking with the larger community in mind;
3. We are all connected to the ecology of the planet and are stewards of the environment.

Essential Questions for Programs

1. Why do students need to become fluent in their chosen field of art education, interior design, and studio art?
2. What are the characteristics of a real global citizen? A real steward of the environment?
3. Why and how can the programs in the School of Art best contribute to the development of effective global citizens? Conscientious protectors of the environment?
4. Why do some individuals become successful world citizens and others do not?

Knowledge

At the completion of the selected course of study in the School of Art, students ideally will know

1. Specific methods and skills required for entry into the fields of art education, interior design, and studio art.
2. Key concepts that contribute to effective global citizenship (e.g., valuing belief systems of others, learning a foreign language, travel to other places).
3. Key concepts of environmental sustainability.

Abilities

At the completion of the selected course of study in the School of Art, students will be able to

1. Identify and effectively use methods and skills of a selected art content area (e.g., lesson planning, room design, drawing);
2. Use skills of inquiry, research, critical thinking, and problem solving to investigate local and global issues and to draw logical conclusions;
3. Demonstrate commitment to open-minded investigation, flexibility in thinking, tolerance for ambiguity, and the ability to generate multiple solutions to a problem;
4. Use civil discourse to communicate ideas in writing and through speech;
5. Critically evaluate potential environmental problems and follow through with actions that provide long-range solutions.

Dispositions

At the completion of the selected course of study in the School of Art, students should exhibit certain habits of mind. These include

1. Sustained artistic curiosity: Graduates should continue to refine and reflect upon their understandings in order to grow in the chosen field of study. They should incorporate active inquiry, think in innovative ways, be risk takers, and apply critical thinking to dissimilar problems.
2. Awareness: Graduates should be attentive and responsive to a wider world (e.g., languages, economies, politics, societies, cultures) while maintaining a sense of their own role as a global citizen and artist.
3. Respect for others: Graduates should be sensitive to the belief systems of others and embrace differences within the communities of which they are a part. They should interact with courtesy and civility towards all others regardless of rank or belief systems.
4. Fairness: Graduates should promote a sense of social and cultural equality and maintain a sense of evenhandedness with all others.
5. Ethical conduct: Graduates should exercise sound judgment and act as a role model for others.

6. Honesty: Graduates should be candid with others while upholding high standards of accountability (e.g. trustworthiness, integrity)
7. Compassion: Graduates should exhibit genuine caring for others.
8. Advocacy: Graduates should promote positive change that benefits the local and global communities.
9. Dedication: Graduates should be committed to promoting their chosen field of study by being active in their profession and being life-long learners.
10. Flexible: Graduates should exhibit openness to new or different ideas and be willing to accept alternate view points.
11. Responsible: Graduates should be accountable for their own actions and be willing to act in ways that make the world equitable and the environment sustainable.
12. Leadership: Graduates should be willing to step forward and be in charge.
13. Collaboration: Graduates should be willing to work with others.

Evidence of Assessment: Performance

All programs in the School of Art utilize critiques as a performance of measure. Effective critiques include components of description, analysis, interpretation, and judgment. As such, critiques form a focal point from which the School of Art can seamlessly embed many ideas of global diversity and engagement (see Abilities section). In addition, individual programs in the School of Art offer other forms of assessment.

Art Education:

- Self-check (reflection) of professional growth
- Create units of study that reflect ideas of inclusion and diversity
- Electronic portfolio collections of signature assignments
- Practicum experience and capstone (student teaching) in culturally diverse settings including reservation schools and European destinations

Interior Design:

- Portfolio collections of signature assignments

- Write about and discuss personal work and the work of others
- Capstone experience (exhibition) of personal artwork and artist's statement
- One-on-one meetings with students and faculty

Studio Art:

- Portfolio collections of signature assignments
- Write about and discuss personal artwork and the artwork of others
- Capstone experience (exhibition) of personal artwork and artist's statement
- One-on-one meetings with students and faculty

Other Evidence

- Feedback from students on pre- and post-surveys
- Course examinations
- Written papers about art and artists
- Exit examinations
- Number of students who engage in local events
- Number of students who engage in travel or study abroad

Learning Plan

Implementing the Global Learning Initiative in the School of Art began in July 2010 with the launching of a pre-survey that junior and senior-level students completed. Feedback from the survey allowed us to determine the level of understanding that these students have about global engagement. Information gained from the pre-survey also will help us to identify student interests such as whether they foresee study abroad as useful to their intellectual development.

As we begin to implement this plan, we will encourage faculty and students to

1. Identify and explore issues that are held in common between and among the departments of the School of Art.
2. Take advantage of opportunities to revise personal understandings.

3. Offer multiple opportunities for students to evaluate their own work and the work of others and to consider the implications of their final products.
4. Maximize times on tasks so that sustained engagement more likely will result in real learning.

Summation

In conclusion, the School of Art recognizes the potential within our departments and individual courses to meet expectations of the Global Learning Initiative; indeed, to a certain extent the School of Art already fulfills some goals of the Initiative (e.g., working with other departments outside of the School of Art, providing foreign exchange opportunities, and offering annual travel opportunities to students). In the areas where goals are already being met, we will seek to strengthen those connections and experiences. We look upon the Global Learning Initiative as a stimulus to encourage better communication between and among faculty, to dissolve the silo effect between and among departments, and to become more collaborative and sharing in nature. We will also seek to tie together curricular and co-curricular learning to help our students develop the analytical and interpersonal skills needed to critique and understand the challenges of an international community. Perhaps more important, we will act as professional role models who maintain student learning as central to the development of responsible, global citizens who will care for others and the environment.