

Sonoma State Art History External Program Review

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1. Introduction

This document will serve as my External Program Review for the Art History Program (hereafter AHP) at Sonoma State University (SSU). Herein, I will attempt to describe what I see as the main strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for the program. In preparation for this report, I have read the *Self Study* – a model document – authored by Professor Letha Ch'ien; interviewed Provost Karen Moranski, Dean Hollis Robbins of Arts & Humanities, Chair Christine Renaudin, Art History Program faculty and staff, current students, and program alumni; attended meetings of six AHP courses, and reviewed photographs of AHP facilities. The impressions that I received from all of these regarding present strengths and weaknesses were remarkably consistent, and therefore should be considered with great care. The only notable points of difference occurred in discussions regarding what various constituencies believe the program's priorities should be moving forward, as discussed in section 3.

My top-level observations are as follows:

1. AHP faculty are excellent, intellectually sophisticated, dedicated, caring professors;
2. These faculty are, however, significantly overburdened with teaching, service, and unsupported administrative work, which not only substantially hinders research but also amounts to an unsustainable workload;
3. Faculty retirements have substantially decreased AHP course offerings, negatively influencing time to degree and imperiling the Museum and Gallery Methods minor (hereafter MGM);
4. In seeking to expand AHP faculty, it is imperative to seek to bring in diversity not only in in subject matter coverage but also in faculty demographics;
5. Curriculum is strong, and faculty are bringing important, current issues into courses across the AHP;
6. Facilities and equipment are in dire condition, creating an unsafe and demoralizing work environment that is not conducive to effective teaching and meaningful learning, and are in need of immediate attention lest accreditation be endangered.

In what follows, I will provide evidence of these conclusions, and will also make recommendations for some steps that the AHP could take to build on their strengths and address some of their weaknesses. AHP's responses to the previous review are thoughtful. In most cases, it seems that the department has done what it can, within its means and university guidelines, to address previous suggestions. I am therefore confident that the suggestions made herein will be taken in the collaborative, constructive spirit in which they are intended.

Please note that *Self Studies* are very difficult to produce, and represent a major commitment of time, effort, and skill, and Professor Letha Ch'ien deserves commendation for producing putting together such a lucid document.

2. Art History Program Basics

The AHP is a unit of a larger NASAD-accredited Art & Art History Department that participates actively and enthusiastically in the General Education program, as well as the Writing Intensive Curriculum. It offers a B.A. and a minor in Art History, as well as a minor in MGM. The major culminates with a Proseminar capstone course that provides students experience in independent research and significant training in iterative writing and editing. Study abroad is encouraged (though it is not clear if funding is available to subsidize low-income students, and if it is not, I'd encourage the AHP to seek donors for this important opportunity).

3. Art History Program Mission Statement and Priorities

The AHP's mission statement is clear, but I would recommend rephrasing "visual discrimination," a phrase that now could easily be misconstrued (2). I would also suggest rethinking the use of the term "aesthetic," which bears a host of problematic 19th-century baggage that surely is not intended here but cannot be fully extricated from the use of the term (2).

AHP should consider incorporating content from the General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs) regarding Diverse Cultural Competencies, Civic Responsibility, and Global Awareness into their mission. The campus's strategic plan (<https://strategicplan.sonoma.edu/>) lists among its Core Values: Diversity & Social Justice and Community Engagement. These important issues are noted as strengths of the department (p. 4) and could be integrated with the mission statement of the program, which currently makes no mention of these critical issues. Doing so would strengthen the program's stated goal of "combatting the common misperception of art history as a Eurocentric and exclusionary field" (8).

Though this is not part of the mission statement, a related issue that stands out is that the *Self Study* lists "academic rigor" as a strength (47, but also 3, 4, and 8). This is a notion that is in much need of reconsideration and is often a proxy for other unvoiced values. Challenging students (and supporting them so that they can meet these challenges) is imperative, but "academic rigor" as a concept began in the Romantic period as an insult toward those who deadened their subjects with dry academic prose. It remains an abstraction, at best, and is often used as a tool to police modes of language, writing, speaking, and presentation styles, as well as subject matters deemed fit for study, and other elements of academic life that serve to marginalize students and scholars from non-majoritarian, non-normate subject positions. This is *definitely* not the intent, here, but the concept still needs reexamination and I contend that the term would best be jettisoned from the department's lexicon.

Regarding what the AHP's priorities *should* be, there was a noteworthy difference of opinion between administration, faculty, and students. Each of these offered worthwhile goals, but it would be helpful to achieve greater unanimity so that the AHP can move forward in a way that supports students, guided by faculty, with robust administrative support.

Dean Robbins is highly engaged in the possibility of the donation of Oliver Ranch to SSU, though she acknowledges the substantial challenges this would bring and the massive endowment (in the tens of millions of dollars) that would be required to ethically undertake care of this important collection. AHP faculty seem – entirely understandably – far too engaged in the day-to-day struggles of teaching in crumbling facilities, without sufficient support, in a program imperiled by loss of faculty, to grant much focus to possibility of the Oliver Ranch donation, though if the University were able to land it, the requisite funding could be absolutely transformative for the AHP.

Dean Robbins also cited as a top priority coverage of Native American art, and collaboration with Native American Studies, the Anthropological Studies Center, and Cultural Resource Management. As she argues correctly, the time has come to move beyond rote land acknowledgments to the actual work of transforming curriculum away from Eurocentrism, and believes that the College and University should dedicate substantial attention to local indigenous groups. She spoke movingly of the famous and much-vaunted John Muir’s failure to see California outside of his Eurocentric gaze, mistaking fields of non-native oat grass (spread by non-native cattle) waiving in the breeze as part of what he believed to be an unspoiled landscape. She argued that we need to ask questions about the local, and need to pay attention to the current. Dean Robbins also noted that there is substantial funding available nationally for Native American Studies, which opens opportunities. The campus also has a professorship endowed by a local tribe, with whom the campus maintains good relations. She suggests working to try to get the next scholar in that post to be art historian. She also suggests building connections with UC Davis’s excellent Native American Studies program. Following this, Dean Robbins would like to see coverage in African and Asian art.

Chair Renaudin was also very supportive of a hire, but she would prioritize the gallery director/art history hire. She was also engaged by the prospect of a hire in Native American art – indeed, of a hire, in general – and of possible collaborations with Native American Studies and American Multicultural Studies. I raised the possibility of a joint hire, but she stated that every program in the School of Arts and Humanities needs new faculty and that the AHP needs a minimum of three full-time tenure/tenure track faculty, with which I’d wholeheartedly agree. She cited the need for full-time faculty to provide advising, consistency, and a varied curriculum. As she put it, recognizing the strong adjunct faculty in the area, there are enough bodies, but simply not enough money to staff the needed classes.

AHP faculty are also in agreement that hires are the top priority, especially hires that would provide more diversity of specialty. They note that students are particularly interested in African and Latinx art. However, they seem less concerned about any particular areas, and more concerned about how far overextended they currently are in working to keep their program alive and stable.

Alumni, though, voiced with great force an entirely different set of priorities. In a word (or three): “*JOBS, JOBS, JOBS!*” This is how they expressed it to me. They are very pleased with the excellent education they got in writing and research, and in how to learn,

acquire, and sustain knowledge, but noted the number of museum studies programs in the wider region, and the fact that the job market is highly competitive. They appreciated hands-on gallery internships, on campus and, even more so, off campus (as used to be facilitated well by Professor Michael Schwager). Alumni believe they would have benefitted from learning more about how to work with contemporary artists, how to prepare artists' archives, and so on.

Alumni further wish they had had more preparation for applying to graduate programs, including knowing that it can be necessary to have two foreign languages, and valuable to get in touch with departments before applying, producing a solid writing sample well in advance, CV design, and so on. They wish the AHP had a formal program to prepare students, perhaps run by a Graduate Application Advisor.

Alumni also noted that while they feel they received a solid education, recent revisions to understandings of history mandate changes. The program, at least when they were students, was very much focused, as one of the alumni put it, on "white male academic art." They graduated, as they said, knowing the names of white male artists and art historians, but not white women, nor women and men of color. They also wished they had learned "project management" skills in the program – how to work on larger projects, set timelines, collaborate with teams, and so on. One said that they have recently been hearing the phrase, "The MFA is the new MBA," but feel that training beneficial to the business world should happen at the undergraduate level as well as at the masters level.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

PLOs should be demonstrable. Consequently, current AHP PLOs could use revision. Our sister campus, Cal Poly, has a good description of PLOs that could be helpful:

It is best to write learning outcomes in terms of an observable, behavioral outcome; essentially, learning outcomes should provide a description of what the student will be able to do. When writing the outcome in performance terminology, the selection of an effective action verb is of utmost importance.

[<https://academicprograms.calpoly.edu/program-learning-outcomes>]

That the Art History program's SLOs (all of which use terms like "develop" and "understand") fit their "very hard to measure" and "still too hard to measure" categories (3-4). SLOs should be rewritten using "active verbs that describe what a student will be able to do once learning has occurred." For example, from AHP's current SLOs:

Hard to measure: Students will develop a global knowledge of art history across time periods and places.

Easier to measure: Students will be able use appropriate vocabulary, concepts, and theories to discuss major artists, movements, and objects from across time periods and places.

Hard to measure: Students will gain understanding of diverse cultural and historical contexts from various ideological perspectives.

Easier to measure: Students will demonstrate ability to situate works of art in diverse cultural and historical contexts.

Hard to measure: Students will develop skills in critical thinking, analysis, and visual literacy in order to articulate cultural, historical, and political meanings of art and visual culture.

Easier to measure: Students will demonstrate critical thinking and visual literacy in written and oral analyses of the cultural, historical, and political meanings of art and visual culture.

Comments Regarding Specific SLOs:

1. Students will develop a global knowledge of art history across time periods and places. They will be able to utilize appropriate vocabulary, concepts, and theories while discussing major artists, movements, and objects.

This seems to be two separate PLOs and could be divided. As per Cal Poly guidelines:

Keep statements short and focused on a single outcome. This allows instructors to determine whether or not an objective has been met without having to distinguish between partial completion or complete success.

2. Students will gain understanding of diverse cultural and historical contexts from various ideological perspectives.

What are the “various ideological perspectives”? The campus and the program are clear in their ideological perspective, which is supportive of diversity and inclusion. Are alternate ideological perspectives taught? If so, how is this handled? It is unclear what this means, which makes it hard to consistently measure. Perhaps what is meant is something more like, “through various methodological approaches”?

4. Art History Program Curriculum

The AHP has significant participation in GE, including courses offered in intersessions, which can improve progress toward degree (and hopefully the department and university work to keep costs down, in so far as possible, so that these courses are accessible to all students). Students can satisfy their university writing requirements within the major. Within courses, faculty focus on information literacy and skill-building across AHP curriculum.

While faculty note that flexibility within the major helps students complete their requirements in a timely fashion, students asked for greater flexibility, particularly in accepting coursework from related programs (e.g. NAMS 205: Introduction to Native American Arts) for departmental credit. Given the very low AHP faculty numbers, I would suggest forming formal partnerships with related programs, and either cross-listing their courses with Art History (though I understand that there are technical impediments to cross-listing that would have to be overcome with administrative support) or accepting their courses, as is, for departmental credit.

Chair Renaudin argued that there is need of an effort to plan four years in advance for course offerings, though of course budget cuts can mandate class cancellations and derail plans, as can sabbaticals and the like. However, more advanced planning – when paired with good advising – can improve enrollment, leading to fewer cancelled classes.

Lack of course offerings in MGM is costing the programs FTE and making the minor difficult for students. This is an ongoing problem resulting from loss of faculty and will be exacerbated with the impending retirement of a currently FERPing 0.5-time faculty.

Notes and Suggestions Regarding Specific Course Titles and Catalog Descriptions

Remove “non-western” from department documents (as on the flowchart on p. 11 and elsewhere). I note that, in one instance (p. 18), the term is even placed in scare-quotes, suggesting appropriate discomfort with it.

ARTH 210 - Introduction to Art History

A survey course covering painting, sculpture, and architecture of prehistoric and primitive cultures, and ancient, classical, and medieval civilizations. Students who have taken ARTH 160A will not receive credit for taking ARTH 210.

It is imperative that the AHP immediately remove “primitive cultures” (!), and if this course is focused Europe, that should be clarified. The description of ARTH 160A notes that it has “a global perspective,” and it would be good for this to be the case in 211, as well.

ARTH 422 - Greek Art

This course explores topics in the history of Greek art and architecture from the Bronze Age through the Hellenistic periods (ca. 1000 B.C. - 100 A.D.)

Replace B.C. and A.D. with B.C.E and C.E., in line with other descriptions (and with inclusive pedagogy).

ARTH 430 - Medieval Art in and Around the Mediterranean

This class examines fifteenth-century European modes of understanding the nature of art, representation, and viewing. Content emphasis may vary. May be repeated with consent of instructor.

AND

ARTH 432 - Medieval Art: Post-Millennial Issues

A thematically organized course exploring contentious sixteenth-century issues: gender, race, politics, sacred space, and social organization. Local and global concerns are considered in tandem. The beginnings of art history and later notions of periodization are examined critically.

This is an error in the catalog that should be corrected immediately. The description here is for *ARTH 442 - The Self-Conscious Italian Renaissance*, not *ARTH 432*. Other course descriptions also might be mixed up, and this is clearly confusing for students.

ARTH 440 - 15th c. Renaissance Art: Vision, Representation, Space

A course exploring topics in painting, printmaking, sculpture, and architecture of the 14th-16th centuries in Europe. Content emphasis may vary.

Mismatch between title (15th c) and description (14th-16th c). Should bring in line with one another.

ARTH 444 - Northern Renaissance Art

A course exploring topics in printing, print making, sculpture, and architecture of the 14th16th centuries in Europe. Content emphasis may vary. May be repeated with the consent of the instructor.

AND

ARTH 450 - Baroque: Object to Artwork

A course exploring the fractious debates over the nature of art, the role of hte artist, alterity, social class, and global explorations, especially the exchange of images between Europe and the Americas. Course content may vary.

Note typos in descriptions.

ARTH 460 - History of American Art

A survey of the American experience from pre-Colonial times to the present, with insights into European, non-Western, and native influences.

I would suggest revising the terminology to remove both “pre-Colonial” (which is teleological and frames indigenous cultures as merely awaiting their own conquest) and “non-Western,” which is essentializing. I would also capitalize “Native,” or perhaps better, replace with “Indigenous.”

ARTH 466 - Contemporary Art

A course exploring international developments in post modern and current art with a focus on work made from 1980 and to the present. Movements and styles such as Neo-Expressionism, Appropriation, Graffiti, Body and Identity Art, and the use of

new technology will be discussed in depth. In addition, we will examine the critical theories necessary for a thorough understanding of contemporary art and artists. Reading and writing assignments on designated topics will be required.

Given that many of our incoming students were born ca. 2007, 1980 will not qualify as anything like “contemporary” to them. They will see it closer to “Ancient history”! I’d suggest shifting the focus away from what is now more than 40 years ago to more current periods likely to be of greater interest to students. “Post modern” should be one word or hyphenated.

ARTH 270A - Survey of Islamic Art

This course examines the formation, establishment and variations of Islamic artistic culture from its beginnings in the 7th century through the 20th century.

AND

ARTH 470A - Survey of Islamic Art

This course examines the formation, establishment and variations of Islamic artistic culture from its beginnings in the 7th century through the 20th century. Students who have taken ARTH 270A will not receive credit for taking ARTH 470A

Confusing that there are two courses, one lower division and one upper, with the same title and description. One of these courses and titles should probably be changed to clarify how they are different. I’d suggest changing 470 to not be listed as a “survey,” which is more appropriate to a lower division course.

ARTH 270B - Survey of Asian Art

Course examines artistic developments in Asia (including China, Japan and India) from prehistoric periods to the present.

AND

ARTH 470B - Asian Art

Course examines artistic developments in Asia (including China, Japan and India) from prehistoric periods to the present.

As with 270/470, these are almost identical, though in this case, it is not clear if a student can get credit for both courses. The differences between these courses should be clarified.

ARTH 495 - Special Studies

For upper-division Art History and Film History majors only. Consult department faculty in your area of emphasis. The University contract form with required signatures of student, instructor, faculty advisor, and department chair must be completed before registering for special studies units.

Is there a Film History major? I see a minor and an M.A.? Perhaps this program has been cancelled since the description was written? If so, update the description.

Notes and Suggestions Regarding Specific Course Syllabi

These courses look fascinating, and the sessions I attended confirm their excellent content. Several go well beyond the standard approaches to canonical material. The faculty are to be commended for their innovation and creativity. I only offer a couple of suggestions below.

Some faculty note that textbooks are exorbitant and have therefore gone without, which is a good idea, but I'd encourage faculty to look at SmartHistory.org, which has become a very robust survey for art history courses. When it was first launched, it was not yet ready for prime time, but I believe it now is an excellent *free* text that could work for some AHP survey courses. Gardner, at least last time I looked at an edition, had several highly problematic racist passages and unvoiced underpinnings, and I'd suggest reevaluating it for use in courses, though of course it might have changed recently, and it is well within faculty rights to use it, in any case. Still, after careful review, I have concluded that SmartHistory.org is not only a free resource but also a *better* resource, and, after using it for several semesters and surveying students about it, have found they greatly prefer it to a traditional textbook.

ARTH 424: I note, with some sorrow since Andy Ramage was my own professor many years ago and was a lovely man, that *Ramage & Ramage* is rather dated and there are newer, more engaging textbooks on the market now.

ARTH 432: It seems strange that the week with the topic of "Queer" featured discussions of white supremacy and torture, among other less horrifying issues, though I believe this was a result of student presentations that happened to fall on that day. Still, this might be clarified in the syllabus, if it is to be used age. Also, regarding use of *The Public Medievalist*, while the site is very good, I think it is *essential* that students first read:

Sierra Lomuto, "Public Medievalism and the Rigor of Anti-Racist Critique," *In the Middle* (April 4, 2019). Available online:

<http://www.inthemedievalmiddle.com/2019/04/public-medievalism-and-rigor-of-anti.html> (accessed April 2019).

Finally, and I fully acknowledge how difficult addressing this is, especially in dealing with European art, these syllabi are *very* white. There is excellent work by scholars of color on all of the subjects covered in these courses, and diversifying our syllabi is one of the major steps we can take in the classroom to creating a more just, equitable, inclusive, and welcoming environment for our students. I'd strongly suggest dedicating some time to this effort. There are many great online lists of readings that could be considered. I would encourage the Chair and Dean to support the time-consuming and difficult work of syllabus redesign with release time, summer stipends, or other such structures.

5. Art History Program Faculty

AHP faculty are impressive, teaching a very wide range of courses and conducting research that has been recognized with significant grants, delivered internationally, and published prominently. They are likewise highly active in top-level service to the campus. Students repeatedly praise their excellent, dedicated, caring faculty. “Nurturing” was the term most frequently employed. These faculty, who are according to students and alumni, highly involved and present to help with professional and personal issues, create a close-knit community where most students get to know one another and their faculty well (though transfers ask for more attention, as discussed below). Alumni are still in contact with their faculty several years after graduation, some of whom continue to provide help with writing and other forms of support.

The faculty are to be commended for their work in general, and in these most difficult times, in particular. It is worth remembering that even prior to the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, the region was particularly hard-hit. Students here have dealt with an extraordinary level of crisis in recent years, including the Oroville Dam rupture and evacuation in 2017, the massive Camp Fire that destroyed the nearby town of Paradise in 2018, and the numerous wildfires throughout the region in 2020, all in addition to the pandemic that currently affects us all.

There was some anxiety among AHP faculty regarding the shift from 4 to 3 units for GE courses, but Provost Moranski notes that this mandate only applies to lower division GE, and that she plans to stay away from shift to a 4/4 teaching load as a general rule. Upper division GE course can stay at 4 units. She notes that SSU has not made much use of “jumbo” (120-student) courses, which count as 2 courses in workload, but that these could be considered. She further notes that the campus is contractually obligated to supply teaching assistants for such large format courses. This could be a great help as this shift in unit counts is put into place. I requested further clarification from Provost Moranski for clarification on these points, since they seemed surprising to AHP faculty. She writes (email of 5/4/2021 on file with author):

The relevant section of our [GE Policy](#) is I.C on page 5:

I. All GE courses must meet the following requirements:

C. Be 3 units except combined 3 unit lecture and 1 unit laboratory courses and Upper Division courses specified in the “Met-in-Major” section below. Any other exceptions to the 3-unit requirement must be approved by Academic Programs, the GE Subcommittee, and EPC. Such exceptions must be based on standard CSU, California community college and nationwide practices for teaching the subject matter. In addition, once approved, exceptions (non-3-unit courses) will be scheduled after Academic Programs has determined there will be sufficient 3-unit course seat availability in the relevant GE area.

A department can offer a 4 unit course if it is a combined 3+1 laboratory course, OR if the course is designated as “Met-in-Major,” Or if it is approved through shared governance because it is standard teaching practice for the subject matter. Faculty can also keep a 4 unit course by removing it from GE.

At this time, we are not moving to ask tenure-track faculty to teach a 4-4 load, but department chairs will need to assign a mix of 3- and 4-unit courses to each faculty member. Lecturers are subject to 4-4 teaching loads.

Perhaps there is some helpful route here to preserve some of the 4-unit courses.

I will comment in brief on the contributions of individual faculty in alphabetical order:

Dr. Jennifer Bethke, a lecturer, is serving both as teaching faculty and as a part-time gallery director (replacing a retired full-time director), and covers modern and contemporary art, and museum and gallery methods courses. She is doing very strong work in these roles, but these important areas should be covered by a tenure track faculty member, especially as there is a minor MGM that currently has no tenure track faculty and is suffering from lack of course availability. Dr. Bethke’s *ARTH 468: Curatorial Practice* session was friendly in tone, with a pleasant, open discussion. Dr. Bethke provided solid, clear discussion of the central issues in collection management, and displayed attentiveness to issues of access and comfort of various viewing audiences, which led to productive and affable debates among students. She dealt briefly with biases in permanent collection displays (eg. the clustering of African, Oceanic, and Native American work into a single space at the Metropolitan Museum of Art), as well as with the value of curatorial activism to display rarely-shown works by artists generally ignored in favor of the usual roster of white male artists.

Dr. Letha Ch’ien, AHP’s only recent tenure-track hire, also teaches a wide range of courses. She has an impressive track record of scholarship, and I also applaud her work in the public humanities, publishing in the *San Francisco Chronicle* to bring the results of her research in antiracist art history to a wider audience than reads art historical journals and books. She was highly praised by her Chair, Dean, and Provost as a stand-out hire. She has taken on an unusually high number of high-level service commitments, including chairing Structure and Function, and also drafted the *Program Review Self Study* (accurately described by Chair Renaudin as “an enormous job”). Her dedication to the AHP, and the larger campus community is self-evident.

Dr. Ch’ien’s *ARTH 480: Race and European Art* is a model for the sort of innovative curriculum that could benefit the AHP as a whole. The class session featured a series of excellent student presentations, with lots of interaction amongst the students. Careful input from Dr. Ch’ien kept students thinking about the main course themes, invariably offered in the form of positive feedback rather than harsh correctives. The students are clearly engaged, doing lots of work, conducting independent research into their topics. It was great to see students engaging in rich, sophisticated, nuanced discussions of difficult and important subjects.

Dr. Ch'ien's *ARTH 160B: Introduction to Art History—Learning Community* opened with really warm chatter with the students. She clearly knows all her students and what is happening in their lives, despite the challenges of remote learning in the time of Covid-19. Dr. Ch'ien freely cold-called on students without hesitation throughout, and they gave solid, informed answers. She calls on them with such evident enthusiasm and affection that they sounded really pleased to be called on and to respond. The content throughout was excellent, especially for a 100-level course. The conversation was fast-paced and informative, and the students were very well prepared. Dr. Ch'ien was careful to explain her use of terminology (eg. the ethics behind using “enslaved people” rather than “slaves”), and other such important nuances. She also smoothly worked into the conversation helpful life advice, time management, and other such important, but not quite curricular, skills.

Ms. Anne-Louise Dierkes holds two masters in art history and has completed some work toward a Ph.D. at CUNY. She primarily offers survey courses. I was not able to attend a class session.

Dr. Jennifer Roberson is currently teaching a *remarkably* broad course load, encompassing much of the world's art from prehistory to the present. This is above and beyond yeoman's work, and I hope that she is supported in this effort, but in any case, she can only offer so many at once, and needs additional faculty support. Dr. Robertson is also active in service to the campus, including work on Academic Senate, which is always rather burdensome and merits special mention.

Dr. Roberson opened her session of *ARTH 210: Introduction to Art History* by asking if anyone had heard about any new art history finds, interesting art news, and so on over break, which was a nice way to welcome the students back and encourage them to keep an eye on happenings in the field (though she did not get a great deal of response). Her discussion of Etruscan art was solid and clear throughout. While Zoom is not ideal, Dr. Roberson presented excellent images and worked to draw in students with questions. Interestingly, many of their responses were in the chat rather than via speech, which worked well to allow students to participate without requiring a significant intervention into the flow of the lecture. Dr. Roberson's *ARTH 474: Islamic Arts* was similarly clear, enlivened with the sense of a personal connection to sites and objects that she knows well from her travel and research. Students were engaged, asking questions and participating throughout.

Dr. Jennifer Shaw's impending retirement will have a serious impact on the program's ability to offer the necessary range of courses, and the college should prioritize a replacement hire in art history. While it is generally not necessary to re-hire for the same geohistorical specialty, it is important for art history programs, especially those connected to studio art and curatorial programs, to have a modern and contemporary specialist. Still, such a hire would open up the possibility to diversify the course offerings through a hire in contemporary African or African American art, contemporary Latinx art, or contemporary Native American art, for

example. (Students surveyed noted particular interest in African art; Dean Robbins spoke well about the value that bringing a Native American art specialist to campus would contribute; and the campus's status as a Hispanic Serving Institution would make Latinx art a fitting focus.) This would respond to the program's stated goals, the university's stated priorities, and the current national and international reckoning with institutional racism and the privileging of whiteness (which has been a particularly active discussion in the field of art history, as elsewhere), and could also help the program attract new students through formal and informal ties with related programs on campus (e.g. American Multicultural Studies; Chicano and Latino Studies; Native American Studies).

Dr. Shaw's *ARTH 464: Avant-Gardes of the 20th Century* opened with lively chatter among a clearly friendly and close-knit group. It was nice to see so many cameras on. The course functions with a flipped-classroom model in which students had already watched videos by Dr. Shaw and others, thereby reserving class time for discussion. It took a bit of time and effort to get the conversation going, perhaps because of my presence as an interloper. Still, one small recommendation: most questions that Dr. Shaw posed were, with various phrasings, "Any thoughts about this?" Giving more specific prompts might generate more discussion, especially if the prompts give students something to debate. The discussion became lively when Dr. Shaw asked if Duchamp's *Fountain* was art. This is a great example of a prompt that is likely to draw students in and get them talking to each other. As a sidenote, I was glad that she raised the notion that "Primitivism" is racist, but this was mentioned in a brief aside and could have used more explanation and exploration to be sure that students understand the rationale and the effects that Primitivism has had on the lived experiences of its targeted subjects. This would, I suspect, also have engendered a lively debate.

On the whole, AHP faculty is superb, doing a great deal with very limited numbers and resources. Over the past 15 years, faculty have declined from 5 to 2.5, soon to be 2.0. This substantially curtails course variety and availability, especially in the MGM minor. Multiple students noted that they need only one class to finish the MGM minor, but have not been able to take the course, so will not graduate with the minor. They ask faculty to help solve this problem, to help them overcome curricular gaps. The MGM program is highly attractive to students, but lack of offerings is a significant problem. Lack of course availability is not, though, limited to MGM and is an AHP-wide concern of students. The only fix, here, is the hiring of faculty.

I was impressed by the strong trend throughout the courses I observed of attention to current issues of racism, reexamination of the art historical canon, and thinking about diversity in terms of artists, periods, movements, and audiences. This is true even within courses that might seem from their titles and descriptions to be confined to traditional, canonical subjects and methods. Bringing this out more in the department's mission, course titles and descriptions, the AHP website, and in other ways would likely help the department attract new students engaged in the debates that are central to the life of the country in our present moment.

Clearly, this dedicated faculty need further support to be able to offer their courses with reasonable frequency. For such a small program, the AHP offers a remarkable range of specialized courses. This is a clear strength, but without additional hires, it is not sustainable. No matter how much ground they can individually cover, they can each only teach so many courses in a given semester. As the *Self Study* states:

While we have carefully rotated courses to ensure graduation opportunities for students, we have not been able to offer as many courses as would comfortably ensure easy paths to graduation for all students, especially those who take a leave of absence or cannot attend school full-time. (31)

This problem is noted by students and is among the most pressing problems in the program, which will only be exacerbated by Professor Shaw's impending retirement. The *Self Study* is honest and upfront about this:

The art history program will soon lack adequate faculty to maintain program quality overall even while individual courses remain excellent and advising excellent as well. (32)

Further, the department used to have a faculty member serving half-time in art history and half-time as gallery director. The latter is now staffed by an adjunct who is doing an admirable job, by all accounts. However, as Chair Renaudin argues, the full-time gallery/art history position needs to be staffed as soon as possible, especially because of the MGM minor, which she describes as "a beautiful bridge between studio and art history." The gallery is a great place to maintain the connections within and between various Art & Art History Department programs and areas. This would be her next hire. The existence and maintenance of the gallery adds substantial value to the department as a whole and needs a permanent faculty to run it.

6. Art History Program Welcomes and Advising

On the whole, current students and alumni are highly satisfied with AHP faculty. However, there are two areas where they believe that there is substantial room for improvement: Transfer students, who make up a significant percentage of the major, note having a hard time breaking into the community. Transfer students were not assigned (or perhaps did not know that they had been assigned) an AHP advisor for multiple semesters. This led to considerable confusion and missed opportunities. Ultimately, these transfers figured out that they needed to make a request via AHP administrative staff to be assigned an advisor. Since they did not know the professors upon arrival as transfers, even if they had known that there was a process by which to request an advisor, they said they would have found doing so daunting. Navigating such bureaucratic processes alone as a new student is intimidating. I highly recommend assigning all new students, freshman and transfer, an AHP advisor upon their arrival in the first semester, and

ensuring that students know who their AHP advisors are and meet with them in their first semester at SSU.

Students, especially transfers, crave a welcome to the department event or even merely a message with information about how to meet faculty and other students, be assigned an advisor, and so on. Of course, it is possible that such information is provided and that new students miss it in the rush of information they receive. In either case, though, the information is not currently getting through. Students said that Transfer Day at SSU is great at the University-level, but that the Departmental representative, though friendly, was a studio faculty who was not deeply familiar with AHP.

Students are clearly working hard to create and sustain a sense of community, which is particularly difficult during Covid. They acknowledge that there are some meet-and-greets, especially for new freshmen, and look forward to being able to again attend gallery openings, which they describe as the best way to meet people. They ask that faculty work to make sure that the newer students, including transfers, are actively encouraged to attend and welcomed.

When I explained that the Chair wants four (or even two) years of courses planned and scheduled in advance, they were highly excited by the prospect, and said that even knowing the courses for few semesters out would be hugely beneficial, though they all acknowledge the reasons that this could never be achieved perfectly. If they knew about courses selections earlier, this would not only help students, but would also likely help (as it has here at Chico State) with enrollment issues and instability in the schedule.

Further, I would strongly advocate that the AHP establish *mandatory* faculty advising for all majors every semester. While this might seem like an increase to the already unsustainable workloads, we have found at Chico that doing so saves a great deal of time in that many problems are avoided, thereby obviating the time-consuming and sometimes very difficult processes of fixing them later. In order to diminish the added workload, the AHP could consider cancelling all classes for one day each semester to run a Mandatory AHP Advising Day. These can be tiring, of course, but also can be highly effective and a good way to build connections and community.

7. Art History Program Facilities and Equipment

AHP's once-great building, a gem of the CSU system when first opened, is now in dire shape and sore need of refurbishment or even replacement. It is currently both unsightly and, far more important, *unsafe*. Chair Renaudin believes that AHP needs a new building, but notes that it is not next on the list to be renovated. Leaks, water damage, flooding, rot, ceiling tiles falling on students during class, inadequate ventilation, poor heating/cooling, and an apparently high risk of fire (according to Risk Management and Continuity) are *unacceptable* (see especially 2 and 37-39). This should be addressed absolutely as soon as possible. These problems not only decrease the daily experience of students and faculty, but present serious risks to those using these spaces. If administrators have not been able to see the need to fund this work, they should contemplate the financial fallout

and damaging new coverage that would result from injuries and related lawsuits stemming from a fire or other such facilities (and human) disasters. Given the region's increasing susceptibility to wildfires, the fact that Risk Management and Continuity says that "the particular shape of the exterior siding is highly flammable" is frankly alarming (39).

Further, current data projectors are apparently the original projectors installed when the department first converted to digital images from 35mm slides well more than a decade ago. These were low-resolution, low lumen projectors when new, and are now barely functional. They need to be shut down part-way through every class session and allowed to rest or the image quality breaks down yet further, losing colors and wavering. The computers that run the projectors are similarly antiquated, and one requires a full hour to boot up each morning, mandating that faculty arrive significantly before their class begins just to power it up. When I asked if they had tried to use Student Learning Fees to acquire new equipment, faculty cited difficulties with this process, some of which might be surmountable, but one of which is potentially a serious hindrance: IT support is generally not provided for any equipment purchased by individual departments. This is an area where the upper administration could substantially improve circumstances in the AHP and, I imagine, many other programs on campus that need to replace equipment. That said, the current projectors are too drastically flawed to wait for the next SLF cycle, and cannot be left to the vagaries of an application process. They need to be replaced absolutely as soon as possible.

It is also worth noting that IT has replaced some equipment without consulting with AHP faculty. This has caused problems, such as with the removal of all DVD players in a time when classroom computers no longer have DVD drives. This means that faculty can no longer show important films and clips to their classes. Communication between various campus entities, including IT and Facilities, could be significantly improved, which is something that often requires intervention by upper administration.

In addition to the obvious problems with the building and equipment, students articulated the impact this has on their sense of worth. As one put it clearly:

No investment in the building signals to the department and students that the administration does not see them as *worth investing in*.

Another student said that they felt as if their building was "completely the last possible thought in the design of the university, lost off in a forgotten corner of campus." They perceive (accurately or not) that the science buildings are constantly being renovated and updated while their facilities continue to fall apart. This is a tragic state of affairs, and I am certain that it is one that would trouble all levels of administration. Indeed, the Chair, Dean, and Provost were unified in finding the current situation and its impact on the students appalling, and the Provost committed to taking *immediate* action. New projectors and computers are essential to basic instruction in the program, and these should ideally be high-resolution projectors that produce high lumens and crisp colors. These are not ancillary niceties in the teaching of art history; art history students cannot

learn how to analyze different styles and media without high-quality images. High-resolution projectors are *essential equipment* for proper art historical pedagogy, as much as beakers and Bunsen burners are for Chemistry and microscopes are for Biology. The College and University should provide such basic teaching equipment.

Dean Robbins is well aware of the facilities problems, including problems with Facilities staff, who have not in the past paid attention to AHP faculty regarding problems and needs. She states that she is dedicated to overcoming the problems with facilities staff, which is welcome news, but will require support from upper administration.

Provost Moranski expressed strong support for the program but admitted that she was not familiar with some of its needs and struggles. She seemed entirely sympathetic, and eager to work with the program and chair to start, as she put it, “chipping away” at the problems. While a full renovation is clearly not possible in the next couple of years, it seems that some improvements could happen very quickly, particularly replacing outdated and barely-functional projectors and computers that run them. Provost Moranski expressed eagerness to have this conversation to see what could be done immediately. I found her engaged in these issues and sincere in her desire to address the egregious inadequacies of AHP facilities and technology.

The most positive step that has been taken thus far is that, as Provost Moranski informed me, the problems with the gallery floor (which cannot currently support a scissor lift, needed to hang work) are being addressed. She has just committed the resources to replacing the floor, so that the lift can again be employed, which in turn will return the gallery to being a functional space.

As a small sidenote, students expressed desire for a common area in department, a place where they could hang out and study together, sit, talk, and build community. While this is probably infeasible at the moment, should the building receive the much-needed renovation or replacement, I would encourage the designers to consider this valuable suggestion in the design.

8. Support for Art History Program Faculty and Staff

Chair Renaudin, who is an outside chair from Modern Languages and Literatures brought in due to lack of faculty in Art & Art History, describes the art historians as “extremely capable, phenomenal at what they do, and generous and giving of their time.”

Dean Robbins said that she sings the praises of AHP faculty “at all times and in all ways.” She was highly supportive of these hard-working faculty. She expressed concern about how to support these excellent scholars in their work in a program without a grad program and with a high teaching load. Provost Moranski, as noted above, is supportive of the program, but has not yet become conversant in its difficulties. While the necessary full-building renovation (or even replacement) is clearly not possible in the next couple of years, it seems that some improvements could happen very quickly, particularly the replacement of outdated and barely-functional projectors and the computers that run them. She expressed eagerness to have this conversation to see what could be done

immediately. Provost Moranski asks that I document these issues in my report, which I have attempted to do, so that this can be used as she seeks to address them.

AHP faculty do not feel that they yet know the new (interim) provost, and since she does seem to be supportive, a meeting would perhaps be useful, especially if the search for a permanent provost concludes with her hire. I would hope that whomever the new permanent provost is would seek to get to know the campus and *all* of its departments and needs. They feel that the Dean *wants* to be supportive but lacks resources to back up her goals in an environment of falling enrollment across campus. They were very pleased with the effort that she made in her first year or two as dean to find extra funding for research and would very much like to see a return to that approach. AHP faculty are not certain that the Dean understands the full extent of their unsustainable workload, especially (though not exclusively) in Covid times.

Faculty feel like research expectations have been rising without the necessary support. Faculty research is hampered by their inability to accept external funding due to campus policies that result in the loss of healthcare in semesters of leave.

Faculty state that they have been tasked with raising student numbers through outreach and recruitment, but that this is not feasible, especially with no release time or funding support. They do all they can to draw in students who are on campus, but bringing students *to* campus is very difficult for an individual, understaffed, underfunded program to accomplish. Students and alumni suggested that the program website could be very substantially improved, and that this is how prospective students find and choose programs. They suggested posting student profiles and possibly theses or thesis titles as a way to draw in future students. I concur, and AHP faculty also voiced concerns that the website is filled with outdated and incorrect information that confuses students, but that they have been unable to have changes made. This is likely a larger problem on campus, and merits attention by the Chair and Dean, since the poor websites are surely hurting enrollment in ways that SSU can ill afford at present. There is considerable room for improvement, here. Faculty also noted that campus tours regularly exclude the Art & Art History Department, perhaps owing to its peripheral location. This should be corrected through administrative contact with the correct campus unit (I would suggest starting with the Chair, but if that is not efficacious, then the Dean, and up).

The lack of a visual resource coordinator and of any students hired as part-time support staff is striking, especially as the program faculty are teaching a high load that is about to increase with the change in GE unit allotments, advising all majors (including advising studio majors in all studio areas, which means having to learn the intricacies of each of these programs, well outside of art historical specialties) and minors, and holding substantial campus service roles, in addition to their scholarly agendas. The *Self Study* states that “Per CSU policy, we cannot hire student assistants as readers” (16). Provost Moranski stated that the campus is putting in place new guidelines for the hiring of students that should allow the AHP to hire student support for grading, image gathering, class prep, etc., in the very near future. She also noted that there is unused work study funding on campus, some of which could be directed to AHP support. We have made

much use of work-study funding to fund student work, and have had very good success with this. As an added bonus, it can provide meaningful work for the many excellent lower-income students who should be supported, especially in fields like Art History, which have for far too long been bastions of wealth. This not only denies opportunities to students with great potential but also limits the diversity of thought and experience in the field in significant ways. Hopefully, this support can be provided rapidly as it would be, I believe, a great help to AHP faculty. I would encourage the Chair to contact the Provost to clarify the possibilities here as soon as possible, since AHP faculty could use some help immediately. Again, I sought clarification on this point, and her reply (email of 5/4/2021 on file with author) states:

I do not have formal written documentation, but Federal Work Study students may be hired at no cost to the academic department. If the students are supporting classroom work, they are designated as Unit 11 employees (ISAs, TAs, GAs), and there is a job code called "Work Study Instructional Student Assistant." Those are students the department should seek to hire without any funding prospects. They should contact Faculty Affairs to make progress on that hiring.

This seems worth investigating, though AHP faculty has not been able to get such approval in the past.

Further, adjunct faculty feel that their teaching needs are not given the same consideration as those of tenure-track/tenured faculty (and are supported by some tenure-track/tenured faculty in this assertion). Given the increasing reliance on adjunct labor, these essential members of departments need to be recognized for the work they do and need proper support if they are to provide the excellence in instruction that is desired, which can require *research* support as well as pedagogic support so that faculty can maintain currency in the field, and serve as models for students in the full breadth of professional work.

The AHP once had a slide librarian, but now lacks the equivalent digital support. The full department also had three full-time techs, one of whom worked in photography and art history. Now, the department has two half-time techs who are correspondingly overworked. The most pressing tech need is for a specialist well-versed in digital technology. Much care and respect was shown toward a current tech who is by training a furniture maker and woodworker, now covering everything from digital needs to photography chemicals.

In sum, ***and this is among the most crucial observations I have to offer***: the faculty feel *severely overwhelmed*. They are underfunded, understaffed, under-supported, with workloads described as "ballooning" and "skyrocketing," leading to necessary diminishment in key program elements like writing instruction. They are working in crumbling, hazardous facilities and with embarrassingly antiquated, barely-operational equipment. I want to be clear: I have worked in an Art & Art History department in the CSU System for thirteen years, and am clear-eyed about the limitations of our circumstances. I served as chair of my department for four of those 13 years, and consequently have a robust understanding of the funding structures, the importance of

FTE, the processes for hiring and promoting faculty and staff, and for seeking funding for equipment and supplies. I have also visited, attended conferences at, and lectured at several other CSU campuses. I am therefore speaking from a highly informed and experienced position when I say that *the cumulative circumstances of the AHP at SSU are far below par not only nationally but also within the CSU System*. AHP faculty and staff are clearly a supportive, productive, collaborative group. It is remarkable that they are accomplishing all that they are, and the assiduous faculty and staff deserve acclamation, but more than this, they deserve concrete support from their university.

9. External Opportunities

Students and faculty agree that field trips to LA, Chicago, and even NYC are an excellent feature of the program, though a key retirement has diminished the volume of field trips significantly (as, of course, has the pandemic). I hope that funding is sought to support travel for low-income students. Students and alumni univocally cited Professor Emeritus Michael Schwager as having provided the most extensive opportunities outside of the classroom, the most contact with the larger art world, and thereby gave the greatest sense of professions in the field. They appreciate the efforts and activities of current faculty (and cite the Curatorial Practice course as the most active current offering, in this regard), but feel that Professor Schwager's role in the department, formally and informally, has gone unfilled since his retirement. A full-time tenure-track hire in MGM is likely the answer, here.

Students value the campus gallery internships, but desire more off-campus engagement, noting that the campus is close to the De Rosa, to San Francisco, and so on. They ask for at least one AHP field trip per semester, but would love even more time out of the classroom, on and off campus, engaging in activities germane to the field. Field trips often require some funding or subsidization, especially as they should equitable and therefore accessible to all students, regardless of income. I'd encourage the Chair and Dean to work with AHP faculty to find such funding.

10. Post-Graduation Successes and Concerns

There is significant data in the *2021 Alumni Survey* for reflection. Alumni help point the way toward important areas that could be improved. As the *Self Study* notes, "A plurality of graduating seniors apply to graduate programs in art history each year" (7). Many gain prestigious internships and then jobs at noteworthy arts institutions. They are clearly thriving, post-graduation, but offered wise counsel.

The majority of students say they enrolled in the major because it interested them, which makes sense. Most of these students were *already* interested, prior to coming to SSU. 27% chose it after becoming interested while taking a GE survey (42), which suggests room for expansion in this area. Though the program has shown steady growth over the past several years, despite declining faculty numbers, it is possible that more outreach could expand the major further (and some efforts are planned, 43), as could possible changes to the curriculum of these courses in line with changing student demographics

and interests. Note that students surveyed requested a less “euro-centric” curriculum, a problem that faculty acknowledge (48).

90% of majors are “somewhat” or “very satisfied” with their program, with an equal split between these, which is a positive outcome (21). Nonetheless, it would be well worth working to address the issues that keep more from being “very satisfied.” Since 62% were “very satisfied” with their instruction, and only 19% were “very satisfied” with the course offerings (22), I would suggest that increasing faculty in the program, and thereby increasing the number and diversity of course offerings would be the most effective way to improve student satisfaction. Further, improving the demographical diversity within the faculty could help attract a more diverse student population. Currently, as is frankly acknowledged in the *Self Study*, the AHP student body is largely composed of white women (8). This also limits the diversity of experience and perspective that can be brought to classroom discussions. In conversation, faculty acknowledged that the faculty is likewise predominately composed of white women. The program would benefit greatly from increased faculty diversity and the likely concomitant increase in student diversity. This situation is highly common in art history programs throughout the country and requires substantial and sustained commitments from faculty and administrators to be overcome. Students were blunt in describing the department as consisting primarily of white women at the faculty and student levels, and crave more diversity in their peers, faculty, and course offerings.

The current demographics are not only problematic in terms of student numbers, especially at a Hispanic Serving Institution. Rather, it is clear from some of the narrative results that the program has substantial work ahead of itself not only in adopting antiracist approaches, but in removing actively racist structures and terminology. I reiterate here my strong suggestion that the department’s mission statement be rewritten to encompass this goal overtly. After this, the program should take full inventory of its internal and public documents to bring them in line with an updated antiracist approach.

Though the one faculty member called out (anonymously) for active and overt racism has retired (24), it is good to see that the program is working to address systemic issues, since such behavior neither occurred in a vacuum nor was adequately addressed or even, it seems, acknowledged while the student who brought these concerns forward was in the program. I am very glad to see this self-aware statement in the *Self Study*:

95% of students feel either “very” or “mostly” comfortable in the art history program. However, because this information comes from a survey of students who already chose the major, we should be attentive to potentially unwelcoming program aspects to students who ultimately did not decide to join the art history program. (43)

It is ethically imperative that the program ensure that it is welcoming to the widest range of potential students. It is also, of course, in the department’s financial interests to increase its student base, though this is less important, from my perspective, than the ethics of the situation.

Career advising is an area with significant room for improvement, and this is of increasing importance as CSU student demographics shift to more and more low income and first-generation students. If Arts and Humanities programs are to serve these students, they must help the students (and, at times, their parents) see possible career paths after graduation. Programs like SSU's (and my own at CSU Chico) cannot simply assume that our students will follow our own paths, earn PhDs, and land tenure-track teaching jobs, as the program's faculty are clearly well aware.

Still, current and former students noted that faculty emphasized onto two career paths: higher education and gallery/museum curation. Students and alumni not pursuing either of these paths have felt the need to defend their goals, which were met with much skepticism. There are, though, many more careers related to art history and alumni have at times found their way to them, but without the support and preparation they would have liked. Art history graduates find work as art dealers, auctioneers, journalists, critics, conservators, grant writers, specialist librarians, appraisers, secondary school teachers, and on. Many of these careers are unfamiliar to students, so we need to introduce them.

Further, students have recently felt discouraged by faculty. As one put it, "This semester has been about how there are no jobs." Another said that they felt they were being taught that "grad school sucks and is pointless." The students are passionate and optimistic about their chosen field and find this approach discouraging and depressing, though they say that they are pushing past these dissuasions, and have applied for and got into grad programs.

Of course, faculty are merely being honest when they point out how few jobs there are in the field, and how challenging graduate school can be, and are perhaps also channeling some of their own frustration with the problems they face at SSU, but I would encourage them to temper the negative with some hope. One student opined, "I'm questioning my own existence." This is certainly not the feeling that AHP faculty are hoping to invoke, so I would ask them to be more mindful of how they frame the challenges of the field, and how they might balance that with positivity. These faculty self-evidently love their field and their work, despite it all, and should remember to express this in talking with their students!

I would suggest developing a catalog course in Careers in Art History, with units on several possible careers, as well as skills units focused on job application needs. I am happy to provide a sample course outline if this would be welcome. Even those students pursuing the traditional graduate school route desire more and earlier guidance in preparing their materials. This is a vital element of supporting our students for productive careers post-graduation. Partnerships with career advising centers and other campus student support systems could be helpful, as well.

The proposed plan to begin an annual exit survey for graduating students is an excellent idea.

11. Conclusion

AHP faculty have a clear-eyed and honest view of their strengths, successes, and weaknesses, supported by data and documentation. They have excellent, dedicated, caring faculty who are laboring under deeply inadequate conditions in terms of workload, facilities, and support from the campus, though the Dean and Provost both pledged additional support for the AHP during our conversations. AHP faculty have strong plans to build on their successes, and to update their curriculum in tune with changing demographics and cultural conversations within and outside of the field.

The most impressive opportunity for the AHP is the possible donation of Oliver Ranch, but this would require a massive endowment and carefully negotiated structures for the maintenance of the site by specialist art handlers rather than facilities staff. More immediate concerns, though, should probably take precedence for the moment: crumbling infrastructure, drastically outdated and barely operational equipment, inadequate faculty numbers and support for current faculty. These problems all hamper the efforts of the exceptional faculty of the AHP to offer the highest quality education that they could to their students, who in turn feel neglected and undervalued by the university. Some of these problems could be addressed with great speed and with what are – in the scope of a university budget – relatively small expenditures and these should be addressed immediately. In addition to the harm these problems cause to students, faculty, and staff, and the safety hazards they cause, these problems will also imperil the campus's NASAD accreditation if not dealt with. The administration should develop and commit to a concrete timeline to address the larger facilities problems. To this end, the Provost stated that she will ask for a full facilities review of the building, as she was not aware of the severity of the problems.

Further, greater clarity is needed between the AHP and Facilities regarding work that is part of the pedagogic mission of training art historians for work in museums and galleries (I.E. patching and painting gallery walls, drilling and nailing as needed for hanging and mounting works of art, and all actual handling of works of art must be done by art historical faculty and staff, rather than by Facilities staff.) The Provost understands the issues here, and her help is needed by AHP faculty to help improve communications with and understanding by Facilities management.

In closing, I repeat: the faculty and staff of the AHP at SSU are to be commended for the work they are doing, despite their adverse circumstances. This is a program that could flourish with the proper support, and which will degrade, moving forward, without serious attention to diminished faculty and funding, and crumbling facilities.