

Artistic Experience Assessment Summary

Executive Summary

During the Fall 2018 semester, the Drake Curriculum Analysis Committee (DCAC) reviewed the Artistic Experience (AE) Area of Inquiry (AOI) by analyzing student self-perceptions of academic engagement and perceived learning gains, and by initiating a faculty review of student work in the AOI. The AE AOI consists of the following outcomes: (1) identification, (2) role of art, (3) analysis, and (4) application/engagement.

1. Identify the characteristics of different artistic styles - visual, musical, or theatrical - and the factors that contributed to their establishment.
2. Articulate the role played by an art form - visual, musical, or theatrical - in the development of culture(s) or as a distinctive expression of human identity and creativity.
3. Articulate an analytical and reasoned understanding of a specific visual, musical, or theatrical art form and communicate this understanding in an appropriate form, whether oral or written or through the artistic medium itself.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the nature of the visual, musical, or theatrical arts through the application of or engagement with an art form.

Drake students rate their perceptions of their abilities to “create or interpret art” lowest among the suite of general education skills and abilities (34% of undergraduates reported “strong” or “very strong” skills on the 2018 Drake Student Survey). However, students’ perception of their skills significantly change ($p < 0.05$) throughout their time at Drake.

Faculty review of student work revealed basic competence of learning outcomes. Faculty largely found that students are able to apply and engage with art or art forms in ways that demonstrate an understanding of art; however, students are less able to go deeper in their identification of characteristics of the medium, analysis of the medium, or its role in culture or human expression. During the AOI workshop, faculty discussed:

- Artistic Literacy
- Rationale for Artistic Experience AOI
- Intentionality
- Fear and Taking Risks.
- Connection between courses and concepts.
- Synthesis.

To address these concerns, DCAC has developed the following recommendations.

For the Faculty Senate:

1. Revise the name of the AOI from “Artistic Experience” to “Artistic Literacy.”
2. Establish statement of purpose and function for AOIs that stresses the relevance to students.

For the faculty:

3. Encourage more low-stakes assessment to allow students to practice, take risks, and embrace fear.

For the Provost's Office:

4. Better communicate the purpose and function of all AOIs to faculty, advisors, and students.
5. Review and revise student survey questions to ensure greater alignment with AOI outcomes.
6. Investigate resource availability for students to practice skills outside of class (computer and practical lab space, tool availability).
7. Investigate holding an AOI learning conference with break out time for individual AOI groups.
8. Investigate holding a faculty teaching and learning workshop (e.g., similar to 2007 Active Learning seminar) where faculty could examine ways to promote complex thinking (analysis, synthesis, application).
9. Create a document of best practices, guidelines, and resources for each AOI.

Overview

The Drake Curriculum promises to provide students with a meaningful liberal arts education through three components: a First-Year Seminar, a set of Areas of Inquiry (AOI) requirements, and a Senior Capstone. Our institution maintains a commitment to inquire into the consequences of our work with students, something Lee Shulman described as a “pedagogical imperative.”¹

To provide evidence of student learning in the Drake Curriculum, the Drake Curriculum Analysis Committee (DCAC) regularly performs on-going inquiry of the Drake Curriculum. During the Fall 2018 semester, DCAC analyzed the Artistic Experience (AE) AOI. Drake students will “learn to interpret and/or create art”² through (1) identification, (2) role of art, (3) analysis, and (4) application/engagement.

1. Identify the characteristics of different artistic styles - visual, musical, or theatrical - and the factors that contributed to their establishment.
2. Articulate the role played by an art form - visual, musical, or theatrical - in the development of culture(s) or as a distinctive expression of human identity and creativity.
3. Articulate an analytical and reasoned understanding of a specific visual, musical, or theatrical art form and communicate this understanding in an appropriate form, whether oral or written or through the artistic medium itself.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the nature of the visual, musical, or theatrical arts through the application of or engagement with an art form.

DCAC provides evidence of student learning in this AOI through direct and indirect data.

Student Self-perceptions of Skills

Student self-reported data from several sources provide valuable context to understand challenges in particular skill areas. Student self-reported data is pulled from the 2016 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), the 2018 Drake Student Survey (DSS), and the 2013-2016 Foundations of Learning Assessment (FLA).

On the 2018 DSS, 34% of Drake undergraduate and P1-P2 students reported “Strong” or “Very Strong” skills in creating or interpreting art. This is comparable to student perceptions from the 2017 DSS (35% “Strong” or “Very Strong”).

Drake students’ perception of their skills in artistic experience significantly change throughout their time at Drake. Results of the 2013-17 Longitudinal Panel study show significant growth ($p < 0.05$) in students’ self-reported skills over their Drake experience.

¹Shulman, L. S. (2003). No drive-by teachers. Carnegie Perspectives. Retrieved from <http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/perspectives/no-drive-teachers>

² The Drake Curriculum: Artistic Experience. (n.d.). Retrieved January 3, 2019, from <https://www.drake.edu/dc/areasofinquiry/artisticexperience/>

Although, Drake students scored their skill level in artistic experience (“Create or interpret art”) the lowest out of the 18 skills measured by the 2013-17 Longitudinal Panel Study (3.02 pre-test mean [FLA]; 3.12 post-test mean[DSS]). The 2013-17 Longitudinal Panel Study compares students’ self-reported skill on institutional learning outcomes from before entering Drake to at least a year into their Drake experience. See Appendix B for full results.

Faculty Review of Student Work

In Fall 2018, DCAC worked with a select group of AE AOI faculty to develop criteria and levels of performance per criteria based upon on the existing AE AOI outcomes. Later in the Fall semester, Drake University faculty teaching in the AE AOI reviewed samples of student work and explored student skills in artistic experience. DCAC aggregated results to focus on Drake’s overall effectiveness in supporting student learning.

DCAC solicited samples of student work from AOI faculty and selected 30 representative samples from 10 different courses or sections that covered Art Education, Drawing, Film, Graphic Design, Journalism, Philosophy/Aesthetics, and Theatre. The majority of student work centered on visual art, and the primary gap in coverage that may affect these results is the lack of student work analyzed from Music. Additional gaps in coverage included Art History, non-Drawing Studio Arts, and other performance-heavy subjects.

In Fall 2018, faculty used the criteria and levels of performance described above to evaluate student work. The AE criteria include the following:

- Identification
 - Does the student identify the characteristics of different artistic styles?
 - Does the student identify the factors that contributed to the establishment of these characteristics?
- Role of Art
 - Does the student articulate the role played by an art form in the development of culture(s) OR as a distinctive expression of human identity and creativity?
- Analysis
 - Does the student articulate an analytical and reasoned understanding of an art form?
 - Does the student communicate this understanding in an appropriate form, whether oral or written or through the artistic medium itself?
- Application/Engagement
 - Does the student demonstrate an understanding of the nature of the visual, musical, or theatrical arts through the application of or engagement with an art form?

All faculty who teach in this AOI were invited to participate and six AOI faculty agreed to participate. Aggregate results of six raters are shown in Figure 1 below. This represents the

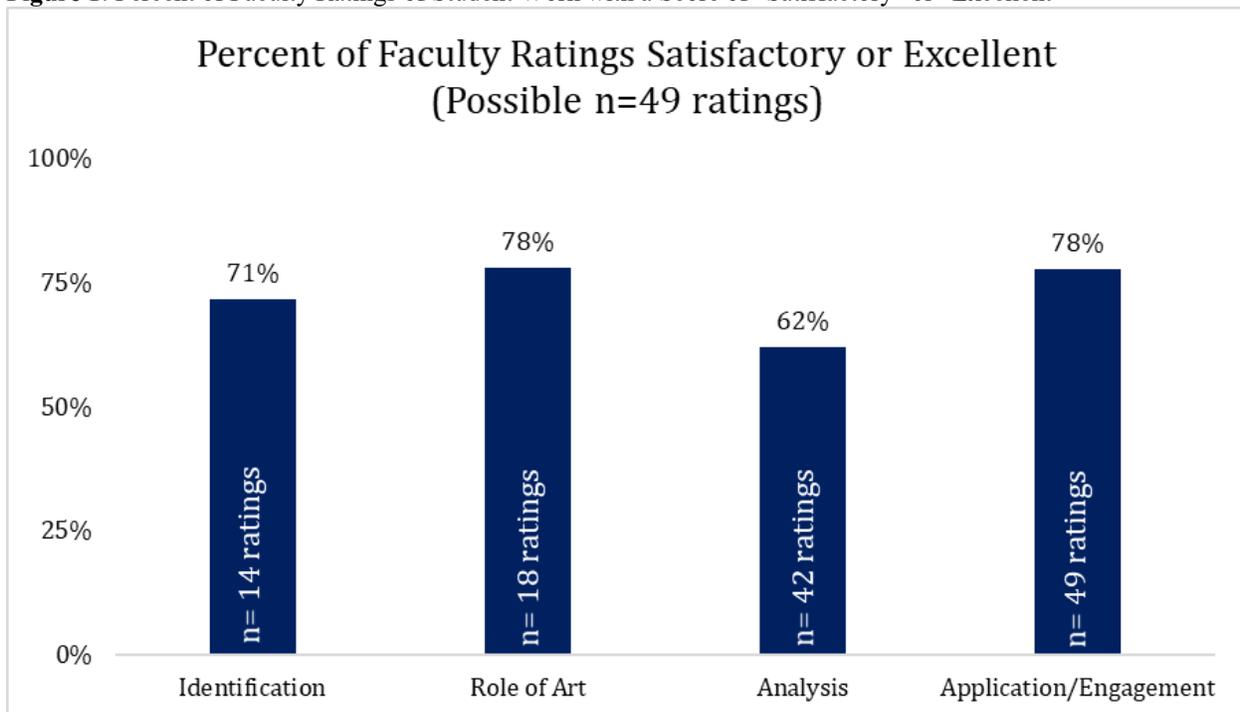
percent of faculty ratings of student work with a score of “Satisfactory” or “Excellent.” Please note that results are limited by the number and type of student work submitted for review and the number and discipline of AOI faculty who agreed to review student work.

Faculty review of student work showed two important points:

1. Lower ratings for students’ ability to analyze (“Articulate an analytical and reasoned understanding of a specific visual, musical, or theatrical art form and communicate this understanding in an appropriate form, whether oral or written or through the artistic medium itself.”)
2. Smaller sample size of ratings for Identification and Role of Art. For the AE AOI, not all courses apply to all four outcomes or criteria; therefore, faculty only rated the student work as applicable resulting in the discrepancy in the number of total ratings per criteria.

For a more in-depth discussion of this discussion, see Appendix C appended to this report.

Figure 1: Percent of Faculty Ratings of Student Work with a Score of “Satisfactory” or “Excellent”



In addition to faculty ratings of student work, this process also invited faculty to provide feedback specific to each learning outcome. Faculty reviewers identified the following consistent characteristics of student work per criteria. Included below are also exemplar quotes from faculty.

- **Identification:** Students appear proficient in the identification of characteristics of medium, although some students stay surface-level and mostly descriptive. This surface level examination of the characteristics of their chosen medium may be a limitation of the assignments.
 - “Piece offers high level of detail that explains the rationale (connection between characteristics and use) for the decision. Piece considers multiple

items (substance, timing, context, perspective). The integration of these pieces is fast paced - could be useful to slow down the description and interpretation.”

- “While the work considers characteristics of the drawing and the nature of the art, it has a surface level examination. Primary focus is on the characteristics and choices, with less attention to the examination. Note that the assignment structure may limit the space and attention to depth/examination.”
- ***Role of Art:*** Students show a willingness to consider the role of art in culture or human expression, but sometimes can't synthesize their thoughts, show complexity, or expand beyond a personal narrative.
 - “Piece largely describes creation of artwork and the emotions. Clear connection to the nature of art, but largely personal narrative.”
 - “...gives several definitions of the role of art in human life, but doesn't really bring them all together cohesively: art is vitally important; it expresses emotion; it develops ideas; it engages with politics. He/she later concludes that art is "anything that evokes emotion." This seems a little simplistic, and I would have liked to see the student aim for a more complex discussion.”
- ***Analysis:*** Students demonstrated some difficulty in moving past description and into analysis, although sometimes this was because of missing elements in the assignment. For this outcome, faculty reviewers identified more of a divide in student levels. Students who engaged in analysis largely got the outcome; whereas, students who showed less engagement with analysis and largely described what they saw were marginal.
 - “They explored audience, content either provided or sought out and did a good job making editorial decisions.”
 - “Difficult to understand the rationale behind the design. Some aspects are detailed (e.g., angles in foreground), while some are general (e.g., use of flag as a branding item).”
 - “Largely descriptive of details with less explanation of aesthetic or design principles.”
- ***Application/Engagement:*** Students applied or engaged with their artistic medium or art itself that showed their understanding of the medium, critical problem-solving, and personal expression. Less successful students stayed closer to templates and examples, and were less able to engage in their own way.
 - “Student shows a clarity in distinctive media use for theme. Continuity of materials is suggested through typeface and color. Theme cohesiveness could be established through a continuity of repeated shapes, texture, and graphics across print media (ie- squares used in poster as graphic element are not repeated in other media, piano keys in Facebook icon not repeated elsewhere).”
 - “Student photograph shows excellent application of color and shape. Photographic sketch-up shows intent/guide for application with end result closely relating, but deviating enough to show reflective change while in-

- process of engaging the art form. Request student add 20 more years with exaggerated line and more texture.”
- “Limited evidence of effective design application (how include photos from a design perspective). Resume color less friendly for printing/viewing in standard formats - rationale? Difficult to determine the understanding of the nature of art - the rationale for decisions and application are largely based on use rather than the nature of the art and how applying design as an art form.”
 - “Roughly relates to concepts provided in opening paragraph, but with little detail or specificity other than personal experience.”

Conclusions & Recommendations

Through student self-reported perceptions, faculty review of student work, and in-depth faculty discussions about student learning in this AOI, faculty and students appear to grapple with the primary purpose of this AOI. Does the Artistic Experience AOI focus on the student having an artistic experience (e.g., creating or interpreting art) or on the student’s ability to see the world through an artistic or aesthetic lens after the artistic experience (e.g., artistic/aesthetic literacy) Adjacent to this topic, faculty discussed ways to better communicate the value of this AOI not only to students, but also to faculty, staff, and advisors. Faculty also found that students had greater difficulty with analyzing and communicating a reasoned understanding of artistic media. To address these concerns, DCAC has developed the following recommendations.

For the Faculty Senate:

1. Revise the name of the AOI from “Artistic Experience” to “Artistic Literacy.” This change will better communicate to students that the end-result or student learning achieved by this AOI is not a product or experience, but a lens or perspective upon which to see the world.
2. Establish statement of purpose and function for AOIs that stresses the relevance to students. This might also include a required statement on course syllabi. Please see this recommendation as connected to recommendation #4.

For the faculty:

3. Encourage more low-stakes assessment to allow students to practice, take risks, and embrace fear.

For the Provost’s Office:

4. Better communicate the purpose and function of all AOIs to faculty, advisors, and students. This could be through inclusion on course syllabi, through registration and the catalog. Why is this AOI relevant to students? Faculty across several AOIs have expressed that students fail to see the rationale for individual AOIs, or put more broadly, students don’t understand what skills and abilities the general education curriculum helps them accomplish.

5. Review and revise student survey questions to ensure greater alignment with AOI outcomes. Currently the only student survey question relevant to this AOI is “create and interpret art.” This question does not accurately capture the purpose of this AOI.
6. Investigate resource availability for students to practice skills outside of class (computer and practical lab space, tool availability). Faculty indicated that practice and time outside of class is essential to hone the skills necessary for this AOI. Are we providing adequate resource availability to ensure this?
7. Investigate holding an AOI learning conference with break out time for individual AOI groups.
8. Investigate holding a faculty teaching and learning workshop (e.g., similar to 2007 Active Learning seminar) where faculty could examine ways to promote complex thinking (analysis, synthesis, application). These are common themes across AOIs.
9. Create a document of best practices, guidelines, and resources for each AOI. To include language regarding AOI, information recommended to be included in syllabi, community of practice information.

Appendix A

Data for Student Self-Perception of Skills

Students complete several institutional surveys that provide data about their self-reported perceptions of their own learning. These surveys include the Foundations of Learning Assessment taken before their Drake experience, and the Drake Student Survey taken in the spring. These data are compared in the Longitudinal Panel Study that examines students' change in their perceptions of their skills over time.

Table 1: Percent of Drake students (undergraduate and P1-P2 students) who have “Strong” or “Very Strong” skills in the educational goals of Drake, compared to previous years. (Source: 2018 Drake Student Survey)

Item	2018	2017
Create or interpret art (ex. Sculpture, painting, music, theatre)	34%	35%

Table 2: Percent of Drake seniors with high confidence (“Quite a bit” or “very much”) in their ability to complete tasks requiring the following skills and abilities, compared to Peers. (Source: 2016 NSSE Senior Transitions Topical Module)

Item	Senior	
	Drake	Peers
Creative thinking and problem solving.	96%	94%

Table 3: Select Mean Scores from 2013-17 Longitudinal Panel Study (“How have you or your abilities changed in each of the following areas since coming to Drake?” 1=Much Worse, 5=Much Better). *Significance:* *=<.05, **=<.01, *Effect Size:* 0.30-0.50=Moderate

	Pretest Mean (FLA)	Posttest Mean (DSS)	2017		2014	
			Sig.	Effect Size	Sig.	Effect Size
Create or interpret art (ex. Sculpture, painting, music, theatre)	3.02	3.12	*	.08		.02

Appendix B

Longitudinal Panel Study (2013-17)

The Longitudinal Panel Study examines how students' perceptions of their skills change over time.

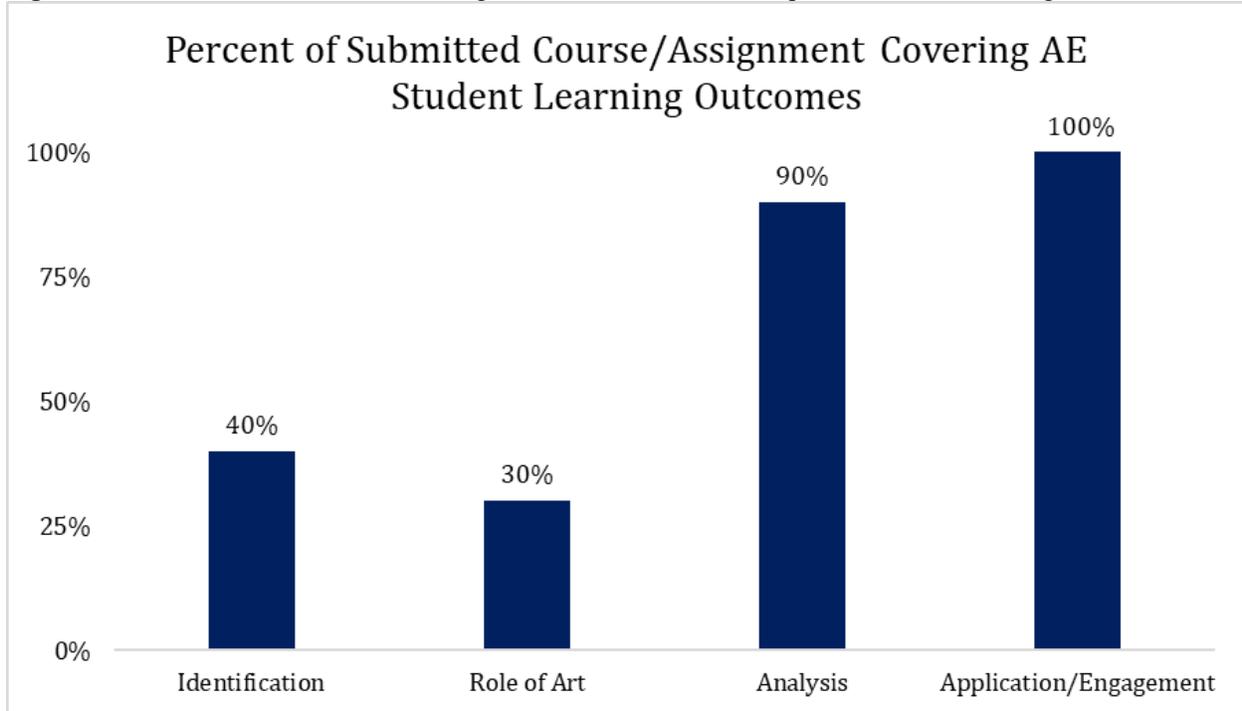
		Pretest Mean (FLA)	Posttest Mean (DSS)	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		Repeated Measures Mean Comparison				2014 Comparison	
				Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Effect Size	Sig. (2-tailed)	Effect Size
Pair 14	Knowledge of how to participate effectively in the democratic process.	3.48	3.95	.542	.388	11.844	668	.000	0.46	0.008	0.11
Pair 5	Evaluate the quality or reliability of information	3.86	4.26	.474	.338	11.701	669	.000	0.45	0.000	0.32
Pair 11	Read and understand scientific writings written for an informed lay audience	3.36	3.85	.569	.401	11.300	667	.000	0.44	0.000	0.34
Pair 13	Ability to use educational experiences to analyze civic and global issues.	3.58	3.96	.448	.306	10.393	668	.000	0.40	0.000	0.23
Pair 2	Employ evidence effectively in writing	3.88	4.18	.358	.234	9.417	668	.000	0.36	0.000	0.33
Pair 6	Understand the ethical issues related to use and misuse of information	3.92	4.27	.432	.283	9.391	670	.000	0.36	0.000	0.26
Pair 15	Communicate effectively with people from other cultures and backgrounds.	3.79	4.13	.412	.265	9.059	666	.000	0.35	0.005	0.12
Pair 3	Construct reasoned arguments	3.96	4.24	.342	.217	8.822	671	.000	0.34	0.000	0.20
Pair 17	Apply understanding of ethical issues when developing solutions	3.84	4.15	.377	.236	8.534	668	.000	0.33	0.000	0.25
Pair 4	Evaluate reasoned arguments	3.97	4.23	.325	.196	7.980	667	.000	0.31	0.000	0.25
Pair 18	Ability to integrate skills and knowledge from different sources and experiences	4.03	4.28	.316	.184	7.439	666	.000	0.29	0.000	0.19
Pair 10	Understand the perspectives and experiences of people who are different than you	4.05	4.23	.265	.115	4.984	663	.000	0.19	0.854	0.01
Pair 1	Ability to read carefully	4.18	4.29	.163	.045	3.468	671	.001	0.13	0.604	0.02
Pair 9	Analyze differences between industrialized and developing areas of the world	3.59	3.73	.221	.055	3.276	666	.001	0.13	0.320	0.04
Pair 16	Articulate a vision of my own values, ethics, or core beliefs	4.15	4.24	.166	.019	2.476	667	.014	0.10	0.039	0.09
Pair 8	Understand the historical, political, and social connections of past events	3.60	3.68	.163	.010	2.218	668	.027	0.09	0.091	0.07
Pair 7	Create or interpret art (ex. Sculpture, painting, music, theatre)	3.02	3.12	.189	.008	2.134	668	.033	0.08	0.687	0.02
Pair 12	Execute appropriate mathematical operations for a given question	3.84	3.87	.102	-.048	0.712	663	.476	0.03	0.821	0.01

Appendix C

Coverage of Artistic Experience Learning Outcomes

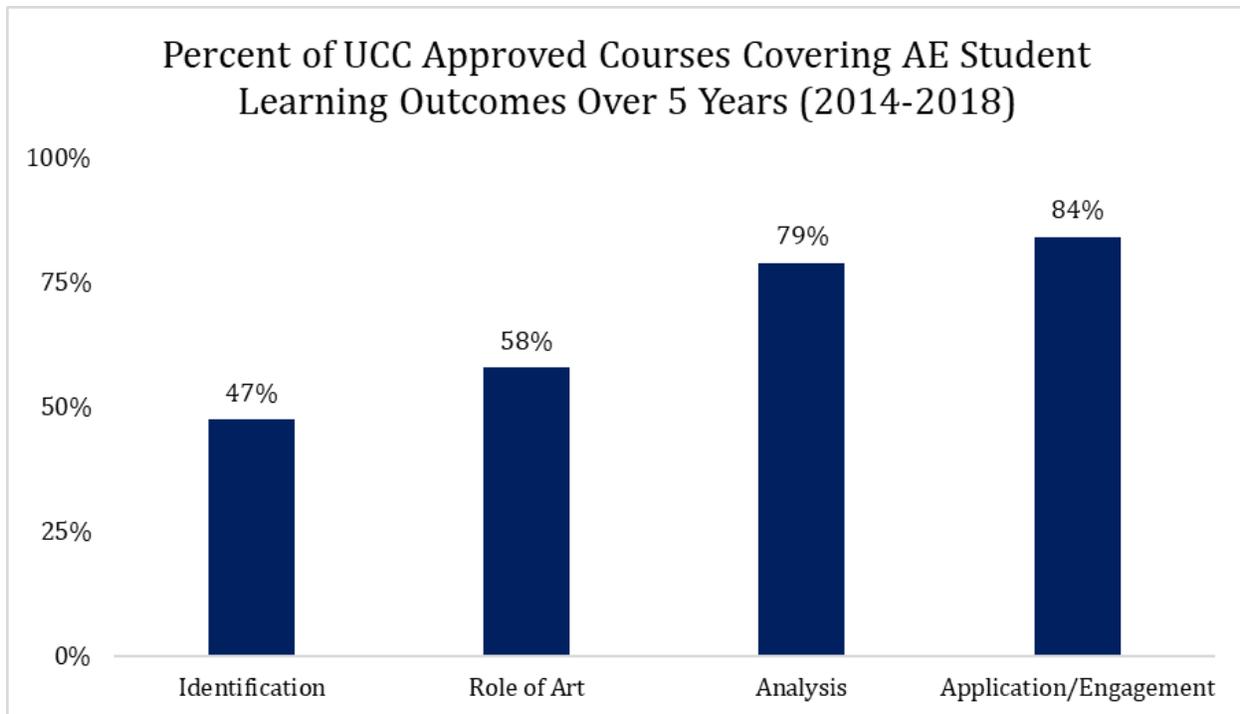
Faculty who submitted student work for review in the AE AOI also indicated the specific learning outcomes that corresponded to their assignment. This analysis of outcome coverage is shown in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Percent of Submitted Course/Assignment that cover Artistic Experience student learning outcomes



This limited analysis of coverage of student learning outcome may indicate that Artistic Experience (AE) AOI courses overly rely on learning outcomes (3) Analysis and (4) Application/Engagement. Because the courses analyzed came from a convenience sample of faculty who provided student work, DCAC requested AOI submission forms from approved AE AOI from the previous five years (2014-2018). An analysis of the 19 approved AE AOI courses from the previous five years (2014-2018) may be consistent with earlier findings (Figure 3), although the differences between coverage of learning outcomes is less pronounced.

Figure 3: Percent of approved AOI courses that cover the four Artistic Experience AOI learning outcomes from the previous five years (2014-2018).



Faculty Discussion of Teaching in the Artistic Experience AOI

On November 14, 2018, DCAC held an AOI Workshop on the Artistic Experience AOI to engage AOI faculty around the results of the faculty review of student work. Faculty present discussed the following main points:

- *Artistic Literacy*. We need to reframe learning in this AOI so that students realize that the outcome is not the experience, but the concept, learning or process. Instead of leaving with a product only, you leave with a new way of seeing the world (e.g., visual literacy, understanding composition).
- *Rationale for Artistic Experience AOI*. Part of reframing learning is helping students, faculty, and staff understand the rationale for arts education in a liberal arts education.
- *Intentionality*. Students need to understand the language, terminology, frame of mind of the arts in order to intentionally use concepts to go deeper.
- *Fear and Taking Risks*. In areas that students find less important, students approach this AOI with fear and are less able to take risks. This varied with students' experience and access. In particular, non-majors approached this with more reticence.
- *Connection between courses and concepts*. Many of the courses are a part of a sequence and build upon each other. The full breadth of the outcome may be addressed across the sequence vs. in specific classes.
- *Synthesis*. Students have difficulty in this AOI taking things to the next level, and connecting and building upon existing knowledge.