I. Writing Plan Cover Page

Please fill in the gray areas on this form.

Date


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEC Unit Name</th>
<th>CLA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art History</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Department</td>
<td>College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane Blocker, Professor</td>
<td>Jennifer Marshall, Associate Professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEC Faculty Liaison (print name)</td>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:block023@umn.edu">block023@umn.edu</a>, 625-1549</td>
<td><a href="mailto:marsh590@umn.edu">marsh590@umn.edu</a>, 625-7120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>Phone</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Writing Plan ratified by Faculty

Note: This section needs to be completed regardless of Writing Plan edition.

Date: 9 November 2017

If Vote: 8 / 8

Process by which Writing Plan was ratified within unit (vote, consensus, other- please explain):

The plan was circulated among the faculty of the department of Art History in advance of a departmental meeting on November 9, 2017 where it was discussed and approved by a secret ballot. One faculty member, who is on leave this semester, voted by proxy. Two others who were out of town sent comments via email.
II. **Unit Profile:** *Unit Name*

*Please fill in the gray areas on this form.*

**Number of Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty:**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
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<td>Assistant Professors</td>
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**Major(s)**

*Please list each major your Unit offers:*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Total # students enrolled in major as of Sem/Year</th>
<th>Total # students graduating with major AY 0##-##</th>
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<td>49 as of Fall 2017</td>
<td>18 in AY 16-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Art History minor</td>
<td>17 as of Fall 2017</td>
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**Total:**

| Major              | 49 | 18 |

**WEC Implementation Process**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEC Implementation Process</th>
<th>Semester/Year-Semester/Year</th>
<th># participated</th>
<th># invited</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3rd Writing Plan Dept. Disc. &amp; Vote</td>
<td>9 November 2017</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
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<td>Mtg. with Liaisons, Matt Luskey</td>
<td>3 October 2017</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dept. Mtg. on Summer Rating</td>
<td>14 September 2017</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mtg. to Discuss Summer Ratings</td>
<td>2 August 2017</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>Summer Rating</td>
<td>26 June 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>WEC Planning Mtg. for 3rd Ed.</td>
<td>16 February 2017</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>WEC Planning Mtg.</td>
<td>19 December 2016</td>
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III. Signature Page

Signatures needed regardless of Writing Plan edition. Please fill in the gray areas on this form.

If this page is submitted as a hard copy, and electronic signatures were obtained, please include a print out of the electronic signature chain here.

WEC Faculty Liaison

Jane Blocker

Jennifer Marshall

WEC Faculty Liaison (print name)

Signature

Professor, Art History, Assoc. Dean for Arts & Humanities, CLA
Associate Professor, Art History

Title

13 November 2017

Nov 13, 2017

Date

Department Head/Chair

Michael Gaudio

Professor and Chair, Art History

Print Name

Title

11/13/17

Date

Associate Dean

Ascan Koerner

Assoc. Dean of Undergraduate Education

Print Name

Title

11/13/17

Date
IV. Writing Plan Narrative, 3rd Edition

Please retain section headers and prompts in your plan.

Introductory Summary:
Briefly describe the reason(s) this unit (department, school, college) become involved in the WEC project, the key findings that resulted from the process of developing this plan, and the implementation activities that are proposed in this Writing Plan, with particular attention to the following questions: what is new in this 3rd edition of the Writing Plan? What, if any, key changes have been made to the 2nd edition? What key implementation activities are proposed in this edition of the Writing Plan? (1 page maximum)

The Art History Department initially participated in WEC because of the pressing need to respond to what faculty had commonly perceived to be deficits in our students’ abilities, whether in writing across levels (from freshmen to seniors), or for diverse assignments (e.g., short exam essays, visual analysis papers, research projects, and senior theses). As we developed our first and second writing plans (in 2014 and 2015), we pursued a variety of research questions that helped us better understand the flat nature of our curriculum and how writing instruction is delivered within it; this information continues to guide our long-term thinking. Alongside our research, we embarked immediately on two top-priority projects: (1) renovating our senior capstone experience (transforming it from a one-credit independent study to a three-credit class, split between individualized faculty mentoring and a classroom component centered around our WEC-defined skills), and (2) developing a comprehensive writing resources Moodle site, available to all instructors in Art History and all students enrolled in a class with an ArtH designator (here instructors can access common classroom handouts, assignments, and sample grading rubrics, and students can find handouts, helpful links, faculty-produced videos, sample student papers, pre-writing worksheets, and so on.).

At this juncture, moving into our third writing plan and a future beyond WEC’s incubator-phase, we are positioned to move confidently to expand on the successes of our initial goals. The key observations that have led us to the following proposal are derived from two primary sources: (1) our semester-to-semester observation of seniors in our capstone class (now in its seventh consecutive semester) and (2) the results of our summer 2017 WEC rating. We have undoubtedly seen dramatically improved effort and performance among our senior thesis writers as is evidenced in faculty advisers’ feedback on the greater quality of the papers, in the Teaching Assistant’s observations of in-class performance and participation, and in the increasingly professional quality of end-of-semester public presentations of student work. While we were disappointed by the somewhat low numerical scores from the summer rating (which focused on samples from this pool), we were encouraged that the rating revealed improvement in nearly all our metrics. More usefully, we have been able to interpret the results of the rating to visualize better the relative success within the criteria, so as to concentrate our efforts on building skills in the lagging areas, while keeping up our curriculum-wide emphasis on both description and historical contextualization (our top-performing skills and the discipline’s bread-and-butter).

New this year in our writing plan are outlines for continuing our assessments, on the one hand, and increasing shared maintenance for WEC-conscious instruction, on the other. We will be expanding our investigation of student performance, assessing it in our lower-division classes; and we
will use this ongoing research to inform efforts to develop a set of tools to help all of our
department’s many teachers--tenure-stream faculty, P&A instructors, and graduate-student TAs--with
the work they do to help students realize art historical thinking, research, and analysis in written
prose. As with every iteration of our WEC efforts, our emphasis has been on supporting instructional
efforts, which we already observe to be healthy in Art History, rather than seeking standardized,
top-down solutions that we knew from the start would not only be obtrusive, but anathema to the
internal intellectual diversity of our discipline.

Section 1: DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC WRITING CHARACTERISTICS

What characterizes academic and professional communication in this discipline?

- There have not been substantial revisions to this section of the Writing Plan.
- There have been substantial revisions to this section of the Writing Plan. (Discuss these
  explicitly.)

In general, writing in art history is characterized by (1) its use of visual, spatial, and material observation as
a form of evidence and basis for argumentation; (2) its clarity and logical precision; (3) its critical and
interpretive evaluation of secondary literatures and primary sources (including the art object/ artifact, but
also more traditional textual sources); and (4) its wide-ranging and original synthesis of interdisciplinary
forms of knowledge. Writing in the discipline takes diverse forms:

- Scholarly articles, essays, or books
- Exhibition catalogs and pamphlets
- Object descriptions for artworks or artifacts in museum collections
- Object labels and explanatory wall texts for museum exhibitions
- Art or film criticism, book reviews
- Encyclopedia entries on specific artists, time periods, artistic movements, or works
- Archaeological site reports

Although such writing emerges in different contexts and for different purposes, it includes the following
characteristics:

- It derives knowledge from visual, spatial, and material artifacts.
- It is descriptive and requires careful visual analysis.
- It exhibits logical precision in the assembly, analysis, and presentation of both evidence and argument.
- It exhibits transparent clarity in the transmission of information and ideas.
- It is effective in representing the many forms of evidence that support the case being made.
- It synthesizes different forms of evidence to bear on historical, aesthetic, or theoretical problems.
- It is interpretative.
- It links together wide-ranging and perhaps disparate historical contexts, artifacts, or ideas.
- It is creative and original.
- The narrative is fluid and well-organized.
It is grammatically and typographically correct.

With these characteristics in mind, the department faculty approved the following description of discipline-specific writing to guide our work in relation to WEC:

"Art historical writing does more than merely report on pre-existing knowledge, or simply represent research that the writer has undertaken and amassed elsewhere. It is rather the means by which knowledge is generated for specific audiences (scholars, students, museum patrons, movie and gallery goers, professional colleagues, etc.), and it is thus a key site in which art historical research and thought take place. In other words, writing is a form of thinking."

Section 2: DESIRED WRITING ABILITIES
With which writing abilities should students in this unit’s major(s) graduate?

- There have not been substantial revisions to this section of the Writing Plan.
- There have been substantial revisions to this section of the Writing Plan. (Discuss these explicitly.)

In our first year Writing Plan in 2013-2014, the art history faculty identified a set of 24 writing abilities, which were used in the external rating of senior projects. As a set of criteria, the list proved overly cumbersome and redundant. It also failed to communicate adequately some abilities that the faculty deem especially important. These include: the ability to report accurately, thoroughly, and reflectively on research findings; the ability not just to report on research findings, but also to position one's own conclusions relative to that scholarship; and the ability not just to state one's thesis, but also to develop and prosecute it throughout an essay, with constant and reliable reference to evidence.

These values amounted to secretly harbored hopes among faculty graders of student work (especially at the senior project level): the je ne s'ais quoi that made the difference between truly successful and merely passable work. It is notable that these values also squared with deficiencies identified by our outsider raters as qualities missing from our senior projects, but not otherwise made explicit in our matrix. ("Many did not advance a thesis or argue for the significance of that thesis," they reported, and "[it is] frequently difficult to tell if a new or original idea has been proffered or developed.") Thus, going forward, we aim to make our criteria more explicit about these values (and others articulated both by outside raters and internal faculty), while also organizing all of them in such a way as to reflect how skills in the discipline build on one another and accrue over the course of one's undergraduate career in the major.

With all the above in mind, we have revised and reorganized our list of criteria, in an attempt to create a more effective matrix that is adaptable to the different forms that art historical writing can take.

Minimum Requirements for Writing in the Major
1. **MECHANICS**: Student writers should be able to minimize grammatical and spelling errors (through proofreading and self-editing), so that content is not obscured by distracting mechanical mistakes.
2. **CITATIONS**: Students should be able to employ professional citation practices (typically in the *Chicago Manual of Style* format), so that readers can trust the veracity of the information presented and know
how to retrace the researcher's steps.

3. **ORGANIZATION/ CLARITY:** Students should be able to write in an organized, logical manner, so that readers can follow a lucid historical account and a consistent train of thought.

### Intermediate Requirements for Writing in the Major

4. **ARGUMENT:** Student writers should be able to put forth an argument articulately and persuasively, so that readers know early on what to expect and why it matters.

5. **DESCRIPTION:** Where specific works of art are investigated in isolation or otherwise used as a source of evidence, student writers should be able to provide careful and detailed descriptions, so that readers can clearly see and appreciate key observations related to the work, and so that they may then follow the writer's steps from observation, to analysis, to conclusion.

6. **HISTORICAL CONTEXTUALIZATION:** Student writers should be able to provide accurate and richly detailed historical contexts for art objects, historical actors, ideas, and/or events, so that the conclusions offered are historical in nature (related to a chronological narrative of change-over-time and/or claims to period specificity), and so are not based on (or not based only on) subjective opinion.

### Advanced Requirements for Writing in the Major

7. **INQUIRY:** Student writers should be able to devise and clearly explain an area of inquiry, so that they may conduct independent research, and so that readers can discern the nature of the conclusions offered (e.g., a report on already-known information and/or ideas; a new interpretation of already-known information and/or ideas; a contribution of new information and/or ideas).

8. **RESEARCH:** Student writers should be able to conduct an expansive, thorough research campaign relative to their area of inquiry, so that they can report on some combination of primary, secondary, and/or theoretical textual sources, as well as non-textual sources, e.g., images, objects, buildings, sites, films, or performances, and so that the conclusions offered draw from and build upon a variety of resources.

9. **ANALYSIS/ SYNTHESIS:** Student writers should be able to develop and fully prosecute an argument throughout their work, so that the presentation of all forms of evidence (e.g., historical information, visual observation, analysis of existing literature) clearly relates to and further develops the core thesis.

10. **VOICE/ STAKES:** Student writers should be able to adopt a confident and distinct authorial voice, so that readers understand that an author is responsible for the text's many decisions (from choice of subject matter, to research path, to conclusions drawn, to writing style -- which may include narrative, objective, poetic, and other forms of art historical "voice").

### Section 3: INTEGRATION OF WRITING INTO UNIT'S UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM

How is writing instruction currently positioned in this unit’s undergraduate curriculum (or curricula)?
What, if any, course sequencing issues impede an intentional integration of relevant, developmentally appropriate writing instruction?

- There have not been substantial revisions to this section of the Writing Plan.
- There have been substantial revisions to this section of the Writing Plan. (Discuss these explicitly.)

The art history department action plan for WEC included four key initiatives: (1) research into the delivery of writing instruction for majors and assessment of the results of that instruction, (2) the redesign of the major project, (3) the incentivization of participation in the writing course, and (4) the sharing of instructional resources. The results of those activities and plans for future work are as follows:

Research
In AY2013-2014, the art history faculty, while acknowledging the existence of (and, from some perspectives, the need for) a flat curriculum, a relatively late-declaring community of majors (often adopting art history in their junior year), and the diversity of subfields and forms of writing within the discipline, undertook to identify modes of writing instruction across the curriculum. The faculty sketched what it believed was the general progression of writing assignments by class level such that courses were thought to move "progressively from visual analysis (1000-level classes), to argument-driven analysis, mixing visual analysis and at least one other form of visual or textual evidence (3000-level classes), to longer papers reflecting the synthesis of many more forms of evidence (5000-level classes)."

One of our goals in the second year (for which we sought financial support) was to test that hypothesis by doing a more thoroughgoing study of writing assignments, writing instruction, and instructor expectations across the curriculum. We hired a graduate RA, Nicole Conti, to assemble, collate, and analyze course syllabi, writing assignments, and writing instruction (through handouts, Powerpoint presentations, and other modes) and map that against our list of writing abilities. She worked with Todd Bedner in CLA OIT and received instruction through the Digital Humanities Workshop to produce data visualizations of her research. In addition, the RA studied the transcripts of a sample of art history majors to plot the sequence by which students typically take our courses, and thus, through what paths they encounter these forms of writing instruction.

We hoped to determine when and how students in the major learned specific writing skills. Thus we wanted to see whether they actually progress from basic skills (such as object descriptions) to more advanced techniques (such as the critical analysis of sources and arguments, the application of theoretical ideas, or the advancement of original theses), or whether, as we suspected, their experience is more scattershot. These data are essential to answering important questions and determining effective strategies, both in terms of our approach to writing in the department and more generally in terms of larger concerns. For instance, if the difficulty of writing assignments in the major is pegged to course level, what are the impacts on our students of enrollment pressures from the College, which demand more higher enrolling courses at the lxxx and 3xxx levels and fewer upper-
division courses? Some students enrolled in the Major Project course in Spring 2015 reported that they had not had training in many of the skills and characteristics spelled out in our original writing plan. Is their experience the result of the course selections of a few individuals, or is it more broadly symptomatic of changing curricular trends? Does the fact that many of our students declare their major in their junior or senior year, and we have equally high numbers of transfer students, mean that they are skipping over important writing experiences and instruction? We have traditionally been circumspect about either introducing additional requirements to the major (we have been advised that, at 31 credits, we are on the "big" side in CLA), or prescribing specific sequences of courses (which is neither natural to the discipline's lateral arrangement of period and geographic subfields, nor desirable given both the late adoption of most of our majors and the staffing problems the department faces as a small faculty). That said, we see opportunities for making transformative shifts nonetheless (e.g., suggested curricular paths, more transparent and predictable relationship between course number and skills taught, etc.). The question we are keen now to address is: how can we ensure that writing instruction in each course is appropriate to the course level and that students can navigate our curriculum to optimize their writing skills and abilities?

The chart showing the distribution of courses and the writing skills that each course teaches, reveals some idiosyncrasies, but generally corresponds with faculty perceptions about the way writing instruction is offered across the curriculum. Roughly speaking, skills related to thinking visually (e.g., through the description of art objects), thinking historically (e.g., contextualizing artworks in an historical chronology or period), thesis-construction, and dear writing are taught in the lxxx and 3xxx level courses. Skills related to research, managing and evaluating evidence, and developing an argument are offered at the Sxxx level. There appears to be some gradual building of skills across the three curricular tiers, although the Sxxx-level classes appear more distinct than the lower-level classes: suggesting a somewhat steeply inclining addition of key skills at what is typically the last year of a student’s experience in the major. In fact, it is clear that--if the curriculum is somewhat stepped--students’ experience of the major is rather less progressive. Our majors are taking mostly 3xxx-level courses across years 1, 2, 3, and 4 of the major. Two-thirds of them satisfy the lxxx-level requirement through transfer credits from other institutions (AP, community college, study abroad). A majority of students take the two required Sxxx-level courses during their senior year; sometimes taking one or both simultaneously with their major project credit. This means that students are consistently getting good exposure to most of the department’s core writing criteria (via the 3xxxs), but almost no exposure to those related to independent research and original argumentation (via the Sxxxs). It is no surprise that professors are dissatisfied with student performance in our most advanced courses (given the near absence of several crucial skills from the rest of our curriculum). Equally, it is clear that majors are currently ill-prepared to experience the senior project as a "capstone" to the major; in many cases, they are encountering relatively new skills at the same time they’re trying to perfect them.

A final chart offers a comprehensive picture of our curriculum over the past 10+ years. It shows, first, the total number of art history courses offered by semester and year (in dark blue), and then breaks down the courses by level (lxxx level courses in red, 3xxx in green, Sxxx in purple, and Bxxx in light blue). These data suggest what the faculty had concluded anecdotally. Whereas the number of 3xxx
level and Sxxx level courses has historically fluctuated from semester to semester (sometimes rather wildly) in response to individual faculty preferences and shifting numbers of instructors, since about 2009, those numbers have stabilized in ways that indicate a uniformity of outside curricular pressures. The number of 3xxx level courses, in which basic or intermediate writing skills are taught, have held steady (in spite of changing factors within the department, such as faculty retirements, leaves, or departures), and thus permanently outnumber Sxxx level courses, in which advanced writing skills are typically taught.

The results of this research tended to square with what we discovered in Summer 2014, from the Report on Rating of Student Work, in which senior projects (written prior to the implementation of the Writing Plan) were assessed with respect to the criteria later established in that plan. As we predicted, the papers uniformly lacked significant writing skills and displayed few of the characteristics of successful writing in the discipline. They served as clearer evidence of what the faculty had observed independently about deficiencies in our students' writing abilities. We consider this report to be a "before" snapshot, against which we will measure the success of the "after" through future rating sessions, one of which will be undertaken in Summer 2017 to assess the first batch of senior papers written under our redesigned Major Project course (described below).

As we approach the next two years in the WEC program during which we turn our attention to writing instruction within individual courses and to the sequencing of courses across our curriculum, we will face more difficult challenges which will require us to make hard decisions. During a substantive discussion of the faculty during a meeting on March 4, a diverse range of ideas were put forth to respond to the problems that our research identified:

- individual instructors make changes to classes and assignments at the 3xxx-level
- introduce a "for majors" component to lxxx- and 3xxx-level classes
- consult with specialists at the Center for Writing to develop strategies for "teaser assignments" that would model upper-level skills
- develop a required junior/senior methods seminar that would focus on the core skills of the discipline
- examine the curriculum in similar departments, to see how (or whether) they incorporate upper-level skills in lower-level classes
- ensure that students take Sxxx-level classes earlier in the major, by
  - requiring more of these (three, vs. two)
  - renumbering our Sxxx-level undergraduate classes as 4xxx-level to mitigate student anxiety around these courses and encourage earlier enrollment
- individual instructors make changes to classes and assignments at the Sxxx- to build bridges more explicitly to skills practiced at the lxxx- and 3xxx-level
- examine the curriculum in similar departments, to understand both how courses at the highest levels are numbered and how many such courses are required by other majors

Discussion revolved around these points, as faculty imagined the benefits, but also the possible drawbacks, of different ideas. For example: at 31 credits, we’re already at the high level in CLA, so any additional requirements at the Sxxx-level would have to be swapped, rather than added, which may
have curricular and enrollment impacts; the introduction of "majors only" components to classes may run afoul of CLA best practices and produce confusion for students who adopt the major after taking several classes in the department; renumbering our $Sxxx$s as $4xxx$s may have only a negligible effect if no other changes to the curriculum are made.

It is clear from our conversations that more thorough and detailed research needs to be compiled. The research we undertook this year only looked at the general skill levels in writing assignments across the curriculum in relation to course level (introductory, intermediate, advanced), and at the most common paths by which students navigate that curriculum (i.e., in what year of school do they tend to take what level of classes?). For next year, we need to look at these assignments and courses in much greater detail (not just in terms of skill levels, but what specific skills are being taught, how, and when) and at the complex ways in which courses work with each other, in what sequences, to deliver the needed instruction to our majors. It is for this purpose that we seek to hire a graduate research assistant to make a study of: writing assignments in every course taught in the department, course numbering and the sequence of writing instruction in comparable departments, the impacts to the curriculum of renumbering courses, the viability of more tailored assignments for majors within courses, and the consequences of all of these ideas on the requirements for the major. Once we begin to make more informed decisions on the basis of this research, the graduate RA would also be of enormous help in organizing materials for any new course proposals or amendments to existing courses.

**Redesign**

Prior to AY2014-15, the Major Project course in art history consisted of a one-credit class (ArtH 3971), for which students registered with permission from the instructor with whom they proposed to work on a substantial research paper. The results of this course tended to vary widely from student to student and professor to professor. Virtually no uniform criteria were established for the course, or the senior project itself. The only guidelines stipulated a paper running approximately 15 pages in length, with captioned illustrations, a specifically formatted cover page, and a binder. Since the department offered students no narrative summary of the project and its goals (much less criteria for its success), and since it provided faculty no guidance for instruction or advising, a status quo emerged in which the success or failure of senior projects depended more or less entirely on each student's skill level, prior coursework, and motivation. We found that students routinely attended to their capstone project in inverse proportion to its ostensible importance; and faculty were repeatedly and unanimously dissatisfied with the senior papers submitted by department majors. As such, the course rose to the top of our WEC conversations as an important opportunity for intervention: meaningful equally for writing instruction and student experience, on the one hand, and curricular evaluation and departmental self-reflection, on the other.

With support from the WEC Program, the department hired a graduate research assistant, Rachel Wolff, to conduct research on and develop a new standing course that would replace the previous "directed study" format. The RA worked over the Summer (2014) to craft a one-credit class that meets one hour a week (so that no official change had to be made to the preexisting 1 credit course, nor official approval sought). The course offers specific instruction in various aspects of the writing skills
and criteria that we identified in the original Writing Plan (such as the description of works of art, the critical assessment of research literature, and the clear articulation of a thesis). In addition, it provides specific deadlines for the completion of the project's component parts and requires that students check in with their faculty advisers at regular intervals. The course includes peer evaluation and concludes with student presentations of their findings to a mixed audience of classmates and faculty. Rachel Wolff taught the resulting course in Fall 2014 and Spring 2015, through a TA appointment funded by WEC.

While the course was successful in many respects, and while student evaluations of the course rated it highly, some features had to be tweaked in its second iteration in Spring 2015. One challenge with the course has been to require students to make time for it and to take seriously the work of the graduate student instructor while at the same time allowing the faculty adviser to retain primary mentorship over the student's research and writing.

In a faculty meeting in January, we discussed the ways in which the course seemed to bifurcate writing (taught most explicitly by the TA) and research (taught most explicitly by individual faculty). In addition, the faculty debated the new way by which course grades were assigned. Prior to our revisions to the senior project, each thesis was evaluated and given a letter grade by the faculty adviser, after which the Director of Undergraduate Studies read all the papers submitted in a given semester and input the final grades (with the tacit assumption that he could adjust grades if he felt it necessary). When the course was initially redesigned, it was determined that a specific portion of the grade (35%) would represent the student's work in the class itself (attending, participating, meeting deadlines, completing assigned tasks and tutorials), with the remainder of the grade representing the mark assigned to the final thesis (65%). This had seemed a fair way to compensate for the new demands the classroom component had placed on our seniors' time, but it resulted in some regrettable scenarios in practice. Namely, students who performed very well in the classroom component, but not particularly well in the view of their advisers, received grades sometimes much higher than what the faculty mentors had awarded. This situation was exacerbated by the fact that the classroom component emphasized the department's writing criteria, but (as detailed elsewhere in this document) these criteria proved incomplete vis-a-vis faculty expectations. So it was that students who received As in the classroom and performed admirably enough according to our WEC-derived rubric, still left faculty advisers dissatisfied.

We are addressing this obviously challenging situation in a number of ways. First, and most simply, new percentages were negotiated such that final grades in Arth 3971 will be calculated according to a 30%: 70% ratio (TA-assigned classroom grade: adviser-assigned thesis grade). Second, new rhetorical and programmatic changes have been implemented in the classroom component to build faculty advising into that experience more consistently and visibly. (Faculty mentors have been invited to class meetings, specific assignments and benchmarks ensure more "face time" with advisers, and the Director of Undergraduate Studies now invites periodic updates from mentors to guard against last-minute emergencies.) Third, we aim to address the ongoing sense of dissatisfaction with student writing, through the revised writing criteria submitted with this Writing
Plan. Since the course is organized around these core values, the more thoughtfully and thoroughly we can compose this list, the more closely the course, faculty expectations, and student performance will align.

We will continue to monitor ArtH 3971 and attempt to assess its efficacy with regard to students’ successful acquisition of writing skills. Thus we anticipate more tweaksto the syllabus and course design as we move into years three and four of the WEC initiative. Because of the department’s flat curriculum, the late arrival of our majors, and the continued pressure to offer more introductory courses where advanced writing and research skills are rarely taught, this course (the only writing instruction that all majors are required to take) is absolutely essential. Thus for AY2015-16 and AY 2016-17, we are requesting financial support to hire an advanced graduate student TA, who will carry forth these important efforts. In addition, as mentioned above, we will begin planning for the course's permanent adoption into the curriculum and research the viability of its being made into a 3 credit hour course.

Incentivize

Rather than treating the senior project as a final hurdle to graduation, one that was often isolated from the student's classroom experience, did not serve as a culmination of skills and abilities, and that was frequently undertaken at the last minute, we wanted to create a more meaningful capstone experience. We recognized that the longstanding format, in which students typically submitted their papers to faculty mailboxes during finals week, and thus never received meaningful feedback or any recognition of their efforts (beyond grades appearing on their transcripts), was structurally antithetical to the requirement's goals. Rather than treat the project as a simple test of what was supposed to have been learned previously (pass or fail, A or B), could we make the processes of writing it, submitting it, and receiving a grade for it learning experiences in and of themselves?

Our task was to try to make all of these processes more meaningful to students, to draw the project back to the center of the faculty's attention, and to use it as a mechanism to train students for lives and careers beyond graduation.

In an effort to make more evident the seriousness with which the department takes the senior project, an important component of the redesigned course is the inclusion of a small end-of-semester symposium at which students present their papers to invited faculty and students. (Our first ever such event will be held in May 2015, after which we will be in a better position to know how to refine and develop further this new addition to our departmental life.) In preparation for this event, the course instructor trains students in important professional presentation practices. We hoped that by raising the visibility of the papers and creating a more celebratory atmosphere, students would learn the standards of writing in the discipline by direct experience. The five students who registered for the class in Fall 2014, the first cohort in the redesigned course, found the course useful and the instructor responsive. They had this to say about their experiences: "Honestly without this class I probably would have never finished my thesis." "I found the writing and career advice helpful in a broader scope."
Of those five students, two were awarded a cash prize of $250 each for having the best papers in the group, and those students will join two others from the current semester's course in a public symposium, which will take place after graduation this May. Since this component of the writing plan is still in process, it is difficult at this stage to draw conclusions about its efficacy, but the anecdotal evidence suggests that the course is going a long way toward building undergraduate self-awareness about the skills they have (or have not) developed over their coursework, just as it's also revealing moments of disjuncture between our curricular offerings and faculty-held values and expectations.

Share
During departmental discussions in AV 2013-14, it became clear that the faculty had been working independently on the challenges of teaching disciplinary writing skills for years, and that, as a result, each instructor had amassed a collection of writing assignments, grading rubrics, handouts, and resources. Since few of these tools were ever shared among the faculty, there was significant duplication of effort as well as a general lack of awareness of writing resources available to students. In addition, since the tools that the faculty have created on their own trend to be designed for specific courses and specific assignments, they don't necessarily translate across the curriculum and thus our students may not recognize their broader value with regard to writing in the discipline as a whole.

In response to this problem, we sought funding in our first year writing plan to hire an undergraduate research assistant, Emily Rohan, for AV 2014-15, to research and then help develop a departmental web page devoted to writing. During the research phase (primarily undertaken in fall semester), Emily's first task was to seek out discipline specific writing resources available in books, articles, websites, and online videos. In addition, she collected assignments, rubrics, handouts, and other materials from departmental faculty. She met with undergraduate students to assess their experiences of writing in the department and to find out what resources they feel would be most useful. During the design phase (undertaken in spring semester), she worked with Professor Blocker to determine the best place for the page to be hosted, and it was determined, through consultation with Kelly O'Brien (public relations consultant for CLA, who oversees the development of departmental websites), that it would be best to use Moodie rather than trying to append the page to the department's more public website.

As of this writing, the page is still being designed and the material uploaded. The goal is for the site to be automatically available to all departmental faculty, who, as co-instructors of the "course," will be able to add or remove materials over time, and to any students who are registered in courses with an ArtH designator. We are currently working with CLA-OIT on populating the site, and utilizing the specific capabilities of Moodie to distinguish between materials that will be available to all users and materials that only faculty and graduate teaching assistants will be able to access.

For undergraduates studying art history, there will be folders labeled as follows: "Before Writing,"

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1 A small faculty committee, using the WEC Plan writing criteria, chose the prizewinners, and the prizes were paid through departmental funds.
"Writing Visual or Formal Analysis Papers," "Writing Research Papers," "Writing Mechanics and Style," "Formatting and Citation," and "Editing, Revising, Peer- and Self-Review." Some of the resources available under these headings include texts on "How to Write an Effective Essay," planning tools for scheduling time toward the completion of papers, glossaries of art history terms, guiding questions for visual observation, links to Harvard's and Purdue's excellent web pages with exercises on writing mechanics, grammar and punctuation, faculty authored handouts on reading and writing techniques, self-review checklists and forms, links to style manuals, sample papers, etc.

Once the site is sufficiently completed (prior to Spring Break), Emily will ask a group of undergraduate students, who are working on different kinds of writing assignments this semester, to beta test the site and communicate with her about technical glitches as well as the usefulness of the materials and links it contains. In addition, the faculty will test the site, evaluate its efficacy, and edit its contents. Once we've had a chance to put the site to real use, we hope to make it a permanent resource for our students, and in the future may design content specifically for it. We're only just now able to imagine this next phase of work, but--in consultation with Pamela Flash--we know already that we'll want to be systematic about this, perhaps consulting Lee-Ann Kastman Breuch (in Writing Studies) about usability testing.

Toward this end, we are requesting additional financial support to hire an undergraduate RA whose job it will be to continue revising and adding material to the site, as well as helping us design content specifically for it. This will be especially useful in conjunction with our ongoing research (outlined above) to understand and redraw the broad landscape of writing instruction in the department.

Section 4: ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT WRITING

What concerns, if any, have unit faculty and undergraduate students voiced about grading practices?

Please include a menu of criteria extrapolated from the list of Desired Writing Abilities provided in Section II of this plan. (This menu can be offered to faculty/instructors for selective adaptation and will function as a starting point in the WEC Project’s longitudinal rating process.).

- There have not been substantial revisions to this section of the Writing Plan.
- There have been substantial revisions to this section of the Writing Plan. (Discuss these explicitly.)

We have not made substantial revisions to our menu of criteria, as they are currently employed to varying degrees in our classes, thoroughly in assessing senior capstone performance and in our triennial WEC rating. However, based in part on the WEC rating results from this summer, and in our attempts to apply the criteria in our classes, we see room for improvement in how we model these skills and in how students understand and can utilize them in their writing. With the goal to be both explicit and concise, we refined our list of disciplinary characteristics and abilities between the first and third writing plans; we now have 10 key skills, as opposed to the initial list of 24. While we believe their current form expresses the spirit of the criteria, we know we have further to go in terms of articulating the specific, identifiable characteristics found in successful and proficient writing. We have identified this further work of explanation and illustration as a goal for our next phase. To some extent, we feel not only
impelled to this work but prepared for it by a number of key feedback streams. Mentors of students in the capstone course have said that they elaborate on the basic menu of principles with further bullet points and cues; senior authors themselves have developed internal rubrics for use in peer review sessions; and graduate students, in a departmental summit on WEC held in spring 2016, expressed continued anxiety about deploying the rubric in grading for the writing assigned in classes--clearer now about what skills to measure, but still unconfident about what constitutes a “good” example of a particular skill as opposed to an “excellent” example. We believe similar confusion mitigated some of the efficacy of our 2017 summer rating and plan to have a more finely grained rubric in place come 2020, without sacrificing clarity or concision.

Section 5: SUMMARY OF IMPLEMENTATION PLANS, including REQUESTED SUPPORT, RELATION TO PREVIOUS IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES, and SUSTAINABILITY PLANS

What does the unit plan to implement during the period covered by this plan? What forms of instructional support does this unit request to help implement proposed changes? What are the expected outcomes of named support?

How do the implementation plans of the 3rd edition Writing Plan relate to implementation activities from the 1st and 2nd edition Writing Plans? What has been successful? What was not successful? How do implementation plans build on what was learned from the first year of implementation? How do implementation plans anticipate the ongoing application of this final edition Writing Plan?

How will the unit move toward ownership of the implementation process after the end of eligibility for WEC funding? When needed, what will be sources of funding and resource support? How will ongoing evaluation and improvement of the Writing Plan take place?

Among the goals we set for ourselves in the first writing plan, and which we achieved, was to turn our senior project course into an actual class (rather than an independent study). The first version of this class met once a week as an hour-long seminar (Fall 2014), while also structuring time for students to meet with individual advisors one-on-one or to pursue research and writing outside of class time. In addition, we implemented a writing prize awarded to a student (or in some cases students) whose work was judged exemplary by a small faculty committee, and we required public presentations of student research at the end of the semester.

We enumerated four additional goals in the second writing plan: to research, redesign, incentivize, and share. In the summer and early fall of 2015, we paid a graduate RA to conduct more in-depth research into our own program and the levels of writing instruction in all of the courses across our curriculum. She studied course syllabi and writing assignments to assess trends in teaching among the faculty, interviewed faculty about their views on teaching writing, compared our senior project process to those in other departments across the college, produced data visualizations showing what skills students are exposed to at what levels, and wrote a detailed report on her findings. [See Appendix C]

This report, along with observations about student performance in the senior project course, helped us to make some key changes to it. First, with college approval, and to reflect the higher degree of seriousness and effort that students (and advisors) accord to senior projects, we expanded the class from one to three credits in fall of 2015. Second, we made iterative changes to the class’ components. Consulting openly with our senior thesis authors, who work with our department writing criteria on a week-to-week basis (and whose final course grades are pegged to them), we also refined those
criteria--shrinking a rather cumbersome 24 point rubric down to a more agile 10.

In addition, we implemented mechanisms in the course to motivate students and telegraph the seriousness with which the faculty take the senior project. We continued offering twice-yearly writing prizes of $500, but got smarter about how awardees were chosen (adding in features like advisor nomination and outside jurors, typically a local curator). We beefed up expectations around faculty mentorship to ensure development of field expertise (requiring students to develop a calendar of deadlines and meetings with advisers). We also continued our practice of having students do public presentations of their research. We tweaked that practice a little (thanks to our brilliant TA instructor, Theresa Downing) by promoting the event to the full department, asking faculty advisers to introduce their advisees, and publishing an illustrated program with thesis titles and student bios. What started as a rather small affair in the fall of 2014, attended by a few faculty, a couple of graduate students, and the undergraduates in the course, has now grown to a major event, the most recent iteration of which drew a crowd of 50-60 people, including the 13 students in the class, their faculty advisers, the course instructor, graduate students, friends, and family. [See Appendix D]

Our final goal in our initial phase of WEC was to share writing-related tools, both among department faculty and among our aggregate undergraduate population: not just majors and minors, but the hundreds of undergraduate students we service every year in our classrooms. We achieved this through the development of a comprehensive and constantly evolving Moodle site, featuring worksheets, links, videos, and other ways to tutor students in our key skills and common assignment forms. [See Appendix E] The first work to develop this site was supported by a succession of two undergraduate RAs: the first, a high-achieving minor who worked with faculty and her own insider knowledge to develop a core set of resources; the second, a high-achieving non-major, who had never taken a class in Art History, and thus brought fresh eyes to the site and exposed to us its deficiencies in both design and content. In addition, she conducted a survey sent to all of the hundreds of students who had access to the site in the previous semester, asking them to remark on its efficacy. Through these efforts, we had a much clearer picture of how well our assembled resources were communicating to a general readership. We continue to expand and amend the site, but are pleased to track its continuing popularity among students and instructors alike.

With this writing plan, we seek to expand on the successes of our initial goals. Both the capstone experience and the writing resources website are now fondly regarded fixtures in Art History—enough so that they have also made visible the many indirect ways that WEC has impacted the department and its constituency. Students are now far more aware of our WEC-defined skills and, so also, more self-aware about their individual capabilities with them: now negotiating our prerequisite-free major with a better view of the whole. This awareness has been enhanced not only in the classroom where, each semester, faculty and TAs are encouraged to hand out our writing criteria and use them in designing and grading assignments, but also in our advising efforts and in our new “Welcome Packets” for recently declared majors, where information on our senior project course and WEC is prominent.

In addition, our end-of-semester senior capstone presentations have become widely attended events, which not only send our seniors off with a sense of accomplishment against a rigorous disciplinary benchmark, but also illustrate its value to our underclassmen. At the same time, we have also begun to see the WEC program as a highly effective tool of self-definition that is enabling us to think more
expansively about other departmental goals, including: promoting and enriching the major, engaging more broadly and deeply with undergraduates (both majors and nonmajors), developing career readiness, refining our practices of awarding prizes and scholarships, and integrating study abroad more intentionally into our curricular options. That is, we have productively applied the same questions that we began with in WEC—*What are our goals and how effectively are we meeting them?*

*How are we communicating those goals to students and demonstrating our values?*—to other aspects of undergraduate education.

In our mature phase of WEC implementation, we will continue to assess student performance against our criteria, not only through the official triennial rating process, but also through two additional mechanisms: (1) the semester-to-semester appraisal of senior capstones with the WEC rubric, and (2) the annual assessment of undergraduate student learning outcomes, conducted by the Director of Undergraduate Studies in cooperation with faculty instructors and TAs. Beginning in AY16-17, Art History began assessing student learning outcomes based on our internal WEC criteria, instead of the campus wide standard SLOs. Every spring semester, we assess student performance on a single assignment in three courses: at the 1xxx-, 3xxx-, and senior thesis levels.

Both forms of ongoing assessment will help inform our major vision for the next phase Art History’s commitment to WEC. Next, we set our sights on supporting writing instruction more intentionally at all levels of our curriculum. We will do this by: (1) working to develop an annual, department-specific training session for our graduate student TAs, (2) working with specialists in the Center for Writing to develop a suite of exercises, assignments, and faculty workshops targeted to boost specific skills, which we now understand to be underserved by current teaching practices, and (3) working to extend the shelf-life of all of these training sessions, so that they may integrate seamlessly into course preparation among our tenure-stream and contract faculty.

To this last point, we note that the current “for faculty” section of our writing resources website is rather sparse, relative to the surfeit of helpful tools supplied to undergraduates. We see this as a natural opportunity for growth. To build this out, we will draw materials from the workshops, and we will utilize our undergraduate student worker to collect more materials from the faculty, research other resources for writing instruction (e.g., websites, exercises, assignments, videos, etc.), and redesign this part of the site. In addition, the student, with assistance from LATIS staff, will help transition the site from Moodle to Canvas or to a Google site, depending on the necessary functionality.

To serve all three of these goals, this writing plan seeks approval for support in the form of both targeted instruction from Center for Writing specialists, and funding for a two-semester, 25% graduate student RA. We anticipate that the targeted, Center for Writing instruction will comprise one-on-one faculty consultation (to be initiated by individual faculty members) and in-department workshops devoted to key areas of needed support. The latter includes the need for help with developing student facility with: developing original lines of inquiry, articulating and prosecuting a clear line of argument, analyzing and synthesizing diverse forms of evidence, and expressing scholarly concepts in a distinct authorial voice. Finally, we are eager to work with professionals on
campus to refine our approach to working with students for whom English is a non-native language, since international students comprise an increasing number of our majors and require a significant investment of time by faculty advisers.

In curating this series of consultations and workshops, we seek the support of a graduate student RA. Besides helping to oversee the logistics, this RA would also work with the department’s WEC liaisons (as well as the undergraduate student worker who will refresh the writing resources website) to develop a series of more durable tools from the year-long series. While we anticipate re-staging similar instructional workshops in the many years to come, we would like to support teaching in the department in the ongoing forms of an annual, WEC-informed TA training session and a suite of resources for teachers (of both grab-n-go and academic-philosophical natures).

The overarching goal of these exercises will be to infuse WEC-conscious writing instruction at all levels of our curriculum in an explicit way that will allow our majors and minors to develop skills consciously from class to class, regardless of the widely varying subjects between them. Also to this end, we are continually working with faculty and students alike to remind them of our WEC criteria: a copy of which is collated in our welcome packet to new majors and distributed to faculty at the start of every semester, with tips as to how to incorporate them into syllabi and instruction. Again, as with our past plans, our interest is not to mandate certain skills for certain levels or courses, but to do more to support our faculty in considering how their existing assignments build toward our core skills, in communicating this connection to all of our students, and in teaching these skills more effectively and efficiently in and out of the classroom. We have elected a supportive model, because we recognize that writing instruction fails when it feels like an onerous addition to already overstuffed class designs and an undue burden on already over-extended professors.

The Summer 2017 ratings confirmed what we had already been observing on the ground, but have been essential in helping us identify next steps. [See Appendix B] Students are struggling most with four skills: (1) argument, (2) analysis/synthesis, (3) voice/stakes, and (4) inquiry. We saw that the skills of description and historical contextualization are relatively well developed among students, but note that, in parsing “description” more closely, the raters observed that students were weaker on articulating the steps between observation, to analysis, to conclusion—key moves that parallel those of our lowest performing skills. Besides our focused attention on student performance in the capstone course, faculty have long observed a kind of baptism-by-fire experience among our majors when they move from the 3xxx-level to the 5xxx. Our past research, in which we studied all our majors’ transcripts to determine when they typically register for courses at different levels, revealed that students tend to forestall their required 5xxx-level courses until their senior year (and sometimes not until their last semester). When Jennifer Marshall, DUS, and Peter Harle, CLA adviser, ask majors about this directly, they report that they defer primarily out of a fear that they aren’t well prepared. Their instincts may well be right. Thus, a key focus of our instructional support phase will be to build a clearer, sturdier bridge between the 3xxx- and 5xxx-level in our curriculum.

Section 6: PROCESS USED TO CREATE THIS WRITING PLAN
How, and to what degree, were a substantial number of stakeholders in this unit (faculty members, instructors, affiliates, teaching assistants, undergraduates, others) engaged in providing, revising, and
● In February of 2015, our undergraduate WEC RA, Emily Rohan, held a “Writing Dish” event to which all majors were invited. She talked with majors about their experiences of writing in art history, using the Art History Writing Resources Moodle page and their awareness of the writing criteria.

● The research conducted by Shannon Flaherty in the Summer and Fall of 2015 included analysis of all course syllabi and writing assignments and one-on-one interviews with all of the tenured or tenure track faculty in the department.

● Regular meetings with the senior project course TA and the WEC Liaisons during the semester as well as at the end of each year include reports on the comments and suggestions made by faculty advisers to the TA.

● Each semester, students in the senior project course provide detailed written evaluations on the course content, format and structure, and on the performance of the Teaching Assistant.

● The spring 2016 summit on WEC with all graduate student TAs allowed broad discussion on the methods of teaching the senior project course, as well as the effects of the discipline specific writing criteria developed through the WEC process and used across the curriculum.

● At a faculty meeting on September 14, 2017, the WEC Liaisons presented the summer rating results and held a discussion among faculty and the graduate representative to department meetings on WEC and the drafting of the current writing plan. Professor Marshall prepared a graph to clarify the relative performance between the skills and change-over-time. [See Appendix B]

● The final draft of this writing plan was circulated to faculty and graduate students prior to a departmental meeting on November 9th, at which the plan was discussed and voted on.
V. WEC Research Assistant (RA) Request Form

This form is required if RA funding is requested. If no RA funding is requested please check the box below.

☐ No RA Funding Requested

RAs assist faculty liaisons in the WEC Writing Plan implementation process. The specific duties of the RA are determined in coordination with the unit liaison and the WEC consultant, but should generally meet the following criteria: they are manageable in the time allotted, they are sufficient to their funding, and they have concrete goals and expectations (see below).

RA funding requests are made by appointment percent time (e.g., 25% FTE, 10% FTE, etc.). Appointment times can be split between two or more RAs when applicable (e.g., two 12.5% appointments for a total of 25% FTE request). Total funds (including fringe benefits when applicable) need to be calculated in advance by the liaison, usually in coordination with administrative personnel.

Please note that, outside of duties determined by the liaison, WEC RAs may be required to participate in specific WEC activities, such as meetings, Moodle discussion boards, and surveys.

RA Name (Use TBD for vacancies): TBD
RA Contact Information: email TBD, phone TBD
Period of appointment (Semester/Year to Semester/Year): Summer 2018, Fall Semester 2018-Spring Semester 2019
RA appointment percent time: Summer appointment will be for a flat rate, divided into the appropriate number of weeks of work; for AY 2018-19, 25% (projected salary and fringe: $18,335)

Define in detail the tasks that the RA will be completing within the funding period:

The WEC RA will work with department faculty and staff in the Center for Writing to redesign the Art History Writing Resources Moodle Page (presumably also converting it to Canvas), expanding on materials already offered (e.g., sample writing assignments and grading rubrics) and including new resources including: samples of short writing lessons on specific skills, strategies for addressing specific writing deficiencies identified in the department’s summer rating results and by individual faculty, handouts and web links provided by Center for Writing staff during group or one-on-one sessions with faculty, etc.

Define deadlines as applicable (please note that all deadlines must be completed within the funding period):

The redesign will begin in summer 2018 in preparation for the new school year, then it will be linked to workshop sessions with/for faculty and graduate TAs throughout AY2018-19, and completed by May 2019.

Describe how frequently the RA will check in with the liaisons:
Describe in detail the RA’s check-in process (e.g., via email, phone, in-person, etc.):

The RA will meet in person with the WEC liaisons during the summer to discuss the parameters of the work to be completed. The RA will identify missing resources and complete a design plan over the summer. The liaisons will develop a schedule of faculty/graduate TA workshops with Writing Center staff, and assign the RA to cull those workshops for handouts, web links and other resources. Thereafter, the RA will check in with the liaisons primarily through email and via in-person meetings as needed. At the end of the research period, in Spring of 2019, the liaisons and the RA will meet in person to assess the results and plan any additional work.

1 An example for determining funding for appointments can be found on the WEC Liaison Moodle. This is for planning and example purposes only and cannot be used to determine final budget items for the Writing Plan.
**APPENDIX A**

### ArtH|WEC Criteria & Rubric

#### DESCRIPTION
Where specific works of art are investigated in isolation or otherwise used as a source of evidence, the text includes careful and detailed descriptions, so that:

1. readers can clearly see and appreciate key observations related to the work.
2. readers can clearly follow the writer’s steps from observation, to analysis, to conclusion.

#### HISTORICAL CONTEXTUALIZATION
The text includes accurate and richly detailed historical contexts for art objects, historical actors, ideas, and/or events, so that:

1. the conclusions offered are historical in nature, related to a chronological narrative of change over time and/or claims to period specificity.
2. the conclusions offered are not based on (or not based only on) subjective opinion.

#### INQUIRY
The text explains its area of inquiry, so that:

1. the reader can discern the nature of the conclusions offered (e.g., a report on already-known information and/or ideas; a new interpretation of already-known information and/or ideas; a contribution of new information and/or ideas).
2. the reader understands the decisions behind the research conducted.

#### RESEARCH
The text reports on, synthesizes, and contributes to some combination of primary, secondary, and/or theoretical textual sources, as well as non-textual sources, e.g., images, objects, buildings, sites, films, or performances, so that:

1. the conclusions offered are based on evidence.
2. the conclusions offered draw from and build upon a variety of resources.

#### ARGUMENT
The text includes an articulate and persuasive argument, so that:

1. readers know early on what to expect and why it matters.
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<tr>
<th>ORGANIZATION/ CLARITY:</th>
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<tr>
<td>The text is organized in a logical manner, so that:</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. readers can follow a lucid historical account and a consistent train of thought.</td>
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<tr>
<td>excellent</td>
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<td>satisfactory</td>
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<tr>
<th>ANALYSIS/ SYNTHESIS</th>
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<tr>
<td>The text develops and fully prosecutes an argument throughout, so that:</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. the presentation of all forms of evidence (e.g., historical information, visual observation, analysis of existing literature) clearly relates to and further develops the core thesis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excellent</td>
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<tr>
<td>good</td>
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<tr>
<th>VOICE/ STAKES</th>
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<tr>
<td>The text is written in a confident and distinct authorial voice, so that:</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. readers understand that an author is responsible for the text’s many decisions (from choice of subject matter, to research path, to conclusions drawn, to writing style -- which may include narrative, objective, poetic, and other forms of art historical “voice”).</td>
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<tr>
<td>excellent</td>
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<tr>
<th>CITATIONS</th>
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<td>The text includes professional citation practices (typically in the Chicago Manual of Style format), so that:</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. readers can trust the veracity of the information presented and know how to retrace the researcher’s steps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excellent</td>
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<th>MECHANICS</th>
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<tr>
<td>The text includes minimal grammatical and spelling errors (through proofreading and self-editing), so that:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. content is not obscured by distracting mechanical mistakes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excellent</td>
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Appendix B
Results of Art History’s WEC Summer Ratings - 2017

Ranked list of skills, from highest performing to lowest:

1. CITATIONS

2. HISTORICAL CONTEXTUALIZATION (A): The conclusions offered are historical in nature, relate to a chronological narrative of change-over-time and/or claims to period specificity (2nd most improved score)

3. DESCRIPTION (A): readers and clearly see and appreciate key observations related to work (2nd most improved score)

4. MECHANICS (diminished score)

5. tie: HISTORICAL CONTEXTUALIZATION (B): the conclusions offered are not based on (or not based only on) subjective opinion

RESEARCH (B): the conclusions offered draw from and build upon a variety of resources (top most improved score)

6. tie: RESEARCH (A): the conclusions offered are based on evidence

VOICE/ STAKES: the text is written in and confident and distinct authorial voice, so that readers understand that an author is responsible for the texts many decisions

7. DESCRIPTION (B): readers can clearly follow the writer's steps from observation, to analysis, to conclusion

8. ORGANIZATION/ CLARITY: the text is organized in a logical manner, so that readers can follow a lucid historical account and a consistent train of thought (diminished score)

9. INQUIRY (A): the reader understands the decisions behind the research conducted

10. INQUIRY (B): the reader can discern the nature of the conclusions offered (e.g., a report on already-known information and/or ideas; a new interpretation of already-known information and/or ideas; a contribution of new information and/or ideas)

11. tie: ARGUMENT: The text includes an articulate and persuasive argument, so that readers know early on what to expect and why it matters

ANALYSIS/ SYNTHESIS: the text develops and fully prosecutes an argument throughout, so that the presentation of all forms of evidence clearly relates to and further develops the core thesis
Ranked list of most-improved skills:
1. RESEARCH (B)
2. HISTORICAL CONTEXTUALIZATION (A)
3. DESCRIPTION (A)
4. INQUIRY (A)
5. INQUIRY (B)
6. RESEARCH (A)
7. CITATIONS
8. HISTORICAL CONTEXTUALIZATION (B)

Ranked list of diminished skills:
1. MECHANICS
2. ORGANIZATION/CLARITY
Art History:
Rating upper-division writing of graduating majors
June 26, 2017

**Method:** A team of three independent raters (two from inside the discipline, and one a writing specialist) scored capstone-level writing collected from this unit. Raters used a four-point criterion-referenced scale, assessing student works as “insufficient,” “approaching sufficiency,” “sufficient,” or “more than sufficient” for capstone-level writing for each criterion provided by the unit (this list is drawn from the unit’s Writing Plan). No cumulative scores were given. Prior to rating student writing, raters were provided a “training” session by a faculty member drawn from inside the unit. During this session, criteria were discussed and anchor papers were rated. After the rating session, raters were debriefed on the student work and rating process.

**Results:** Where 0 is complete (three-rater) agreement on “Insufficient,” 1 is complete agreement on “Approaching Sufficiency,” 2 is complete agreement on “Sufficient,” and 3 is complete agreement on “More than Sufficient.” Each rating represents an average of all raters’ scores for all writing samples for each criterion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senior Projects</th>
<th>2014¹</th>
<th>2017²</th>
<th>2017 Writing Specialist only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># Criteria</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DESCRIPTION</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1 readers can clearly see and appreciate key observations related to work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014: Treats the artwork in detail as a source of evidence for the writer’s claims.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014: Contains close, careful description to help the reader see the artwork on its own terms, and not just as a reflection or representation of something else.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.50 1.45 1.78</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1.69 1.96</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1.50 1.67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1.75 1.88</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>HISTORICAL CONTEXTUALIZATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3 the conclusions offered are historical in nature, related to a chronological narrative of change-over-time and/or claims to period specificity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014: Places art objects in an historical context by positioning them relative to specific dates, locations, cultures, and relevant historical events.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014: Uses the art object as an evidentiary basis for making claims about the historical past.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014: Uses accurate, fact-based information to describe historical and cultural contexts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.60 1.43 1.38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1.79</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

¹ Samples collected from ARTH 3971, Spring 2013, Fall 2013, and Spring 2014, N = 11 (274 pages)
² Samples collected from ARTH 3971W, Spring 2016, Fall 2016, and Spring 2017, N = 24 (579 pages)
<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>the conclusions offered are not based on (or not based only on) subjective opinion.</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>1.58</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2014: Uses known historical information to support more subjective components of writing.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>INQUIRY</td>
<td>The text explains its area of inquiry, so that:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>the reader can discern the nature of the conclusions offered (e.g., a report on already-known information and/or ideas; a new interpretation of already-known information and/or ideas; a contribution of new information and/or ideas.)</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2014: Evinces the pursuit of a clear research question relevant to the paper topic, so the reader feels that a new, original idea has been advanced.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>the reader understands the decisions behind the research conducted.</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESEARCH</td>
<td>The text reports on, synthesizes, and contributes to some combination of primary, secondary, and/or theoretical textual sources, non-textual sources, e.g., images, objects, buildings, films, or performances, so that:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>the conclusions offered are based on evidence.</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>1.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2014: Utilizes diverse sources found through a variety of research methods (such as, print and online indexes, archival materials and objects, interviews, site visits, etc.).</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2014: Identifies and deploys useful comparata, primary sources, and/or secondary sources.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>the conclusions offered draw from and build upon a variety of resources.</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>1.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2014: Synthesizes a wide variety of sources through application to the argument.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ARGUMENT</td>
<td>The text includes an articulate and persuasive argument, so that readers know early on what to expect and why it matters.</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORGANIZATION/CLARITY</td>
<td>The text is organized in a logical manner, so that readers can follow a lucid historical account and a consistent train of thought.</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2014: Allows the reader to follow the narrative from one paragraph or idea to the next.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ANALYSIS/SYNTHESIS</td>
<td>The text develops and fully prosecutes an argument throughout, so that the presentation of all forms of evidence (e.g., historical information, visual observation, analysis of existing literature) clearly relates to and further develops the core thesis.</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Responses: Art History

From RATING SESSION DEBRIEFING

At the conclusion of the rating session, raters completed an online survey. This survey asked for impressions of students’ writing strengths and weaknesses and reactions to criteria. In a brief debriefing discussion, these reactions were further discussed. What follows is drawn directly from the surveys and from transcriptions of the subsequent discussion.

1. Now that you’ve worked through a significant number of individual writing samples from a specific college/department, what patterns of strength and/or weakness did you notice?

Strengths:

- Engagement with primary source material (art, archaeology, architectural, as well as documentation surrounding them)
- Most students (more than might have been expected) understood rhetorical aspects of using secondary sources, knew to think hard about secondary sources and overall claims. That doesn’t mean they all got it right but it’s clear they have been given valuable instruction on these things.
- Criterion 3 (The text includes accurate and richly detailed historical contexts for art objects, historical actors, ideas, and/or events, so that: the conclusions offered are historical in nature, related to a chronological narrative of change-over-time and/or claims to period specificity.): The papers have a sense of how the topic worked historically, (disciplinarians both pleased). There were attempts to go to the primary sources for the social and cultural history.
- Criterion 7 (The text reports on, synthesizes, and contributes to some combination of primary, secondary, and/or theoretical textual sources, non-textual sources, e.g., images, objects, buildings, films, or performances, so that: the conclusions offered are based on evidence.): there was rich description of history and the artifact; the better documents contend with secondary sources, not always successfully, but attentive.
• Criterion 14 (The text includes minimal grammatical and spelling errors (through proofreading and self-editing) so that content is not obscured by distracting mechanical mistakes.): Proofreading and editing were sufficient, rarely a problem. Didn’t notice consistent or significant errors; what errors there were didn’t affect comprehension.
• The way figures were used was standard and consistent. Some made more explicit reference; some students could do more.

Weaknesses:
• It was disappointing that the thesis wasn’t always apparent; there was inconsistency in making a clear point. Half had a claim or argument up front, another included this halfway through, and some couldn’t be found at all or the paper paid lip service but it ended up underdeveloped. In those final cases, students seemed to make a claim on which their evidence didn’t deliver.
• Criterion 9 (The text includes an articulate and persuasive argument, so that readers know early on what to expect and why it matters.): only got first half (what to expect), and came up short on the so what question (WS)
  o Some demonstrate that they “know of” secondary literature, but don’t know it or engage it meaningfully.
  o In some situations, students indicated that “no interpretation is possible,” perhaps because they are self-conscious of personal bias.
• Students rarely framed or narrowed their topics with an explicit explanation that “these are the things I’m not talking about.” It wasn’t that they made small claims (some claims were weak, but still big), but more that they didn’t include moves in the writing to explain why the items were or were not selected. Comment from one rater: “they wrote like it was self-evident because this is the blue period.”
• Bad papers were bad in consistent ways.

2. Were any of the items on the rating guide difficult to interpret/use? If so, which were they? What sorts of questions did these items provoke?

Criterion 4: The text includes accurate and richly detailed historical contexts for art objects, historical actors, ideas, and/or events, so that: the conclusions offered are not based on (or not based only on) subjective opinion.
• This is a low bar to set. It was useful to have but wasn’t encountered much in the writing.

Criterion 6: The text explains its area of inquiry, so that: the reader understands the decisions behind the research conducted.
• Vague criterion, could be interpreted as “Why are we looking at these archival tax sources?” rather than throwing it out there, versus meta-analysis.
• Understood reasons behind research consulted but was hard to apply this criterion to the papers.
• This criterion seems close to criterion 11. If not about the manner of using evidence in a controlled way, is this about decisions in the content... in the research?

Criterion 10: The text develops and fully prosecutes an argument throughout, so that the presentation of all forms of evidence (e.g., historical information, visual observation, analysis of existing literature) clearly relates to and further develops the core thesis.
• Issues with difference between these three: not disoriented, but some documents were logically organized (chronologically) but contained no argument.

3. Did you find yourself wishing that you could address writing issues that were not contained in the rating guide? If so, what were they?
• Whether student had fully engaged with scholarly literature. Many did a good job and looked for ways to enter a debate, but raters wanted to assess that.
• Criterion 8 is more about primary sources and the artwork itself, so it would be valuable to make a distinction of those from other scholarly sources (what is said about those things) – showing they understand where people are marshaling different types of evidence.

• Not every faculty member would value it, but engagement with larger theoretical problems/debates, (not necessarily for ratings since not all would expect) but would be useful to have somewhere in there, one of several categories.

• The criteria allow going over a set of established knowledge, challenging established knowledge, and creating new knowledge to be appropriate, but raters wanted to assess/comment on challenging or creative responses, to give those who make an effort to produce new knowledge more props, as opposed to “the Pope used gifts of art to influence politics.”
  
  • Not a key ability for undergraduates overall. If they feel burdened by originality, they might be combative or construct straw man arguments to appear original.

4. Is there anything else you would like to tell the faculty in this department?

• Could the total documents rated be cut down and still have the variety and cross-section needed for faculty to make inferences? For example, many more Renaissance era documents than any other. These could be cut down by a few and still get that cross-section.
Appendix C
Graduate RA Report on Curriculum and Writing Instruction

Writing-Enriched Curriculum Final Report
Writing Skills across Art History Curriculum & Senior Project
Shannon Flaherty
Fall 2015

Contents:
Part A: Aims of the Summer 2015 Writing-Enriched Curriculum Research Assistantship
Part B: Method of Data Collection, Analysis, and Presentation
Part C: Trend Analysis of Writing Skills Developed at Three Levels of Curriculum
Part D: Narrative of Skills Prioritized at Three Levels of Curriculum
Part E: Comparative Analysis of Senior Project Administration across CLA
Part F: Narrative Analysis of Senior Project Administration within Art History

Appendix A: Catalog of current course offerings with descriptions, assignments, and skills taught/required by each assignment
Appendix B: Graphic visualizations of skill distribution across courses, levels, and types of assignment.
Appendix C: Comparative data on eleven departments across CLA
Appendix D: Documents outlining requirements and guidelines for the senior project provided by a selection of departments

Part A: Aims of the Summer 2015 Writing-Enriched Curriculum Research Assistantship

This stage of the Writing-Enriched Curriculum Plan involved building on research completed previously on writing skills offered at each stage of the curriculum, broadly, and on the timing of when undergraduate majors encounter these skills. Data to be gathered included:
• Skills taught at the assignment level within each class
• The requirements for the major and the senior project comparative to other CLA departments
• Ongoing challenges or concerns regarding the preparation and completion of the senior project.

Questions asked and considered within this document include:
• Writing assignments within specific courses and whether those need to be adjusted to meet instructional goals;
• The nature of the writing skills taught in courses across the curriculum to determine whether some courses need to be renumbered, or if we should introduce a 4xxx level tier to our curriculum;
• The requirements for the major and whether these need to be modified to encourage students to take 5xxx level courses earlier and more often;
• The means by which we can meet these challenges with our small group of faculty (there are currently 10 faculty in the department, one of whom will be retired at the end of spring semester, and two others who are on phased retirement, with no indication from the College of any potential hires)

Part B: Method of Data Collection, Analysis, and Presentation
This phase of the Writing-Enriched Curriculum Project concentrated on two specific areas: writing skills analyzed by assignment at the three levels of undergraduate courses offered within Art History (1xxx, 3xxx, 5xxx) and the administration of the Senior Project. Each area required data collection, analysis, and individual interviews/discussions with members of faculty.

Writing Assignments within the curriculum:
1. Collecting data: I amassed the syllabi and writing assignments of as many courses on the department’s books as possible.
2. Data analysis: Examining the materials from each course, I listed the assignments with writing components, noting their particular characteristics and instructions. Assignments included short papers, research papers, exams (in-class and take-home) most predominantly, though other assignments and exercises requiring writing skills are also represented. Generally, papers and other take-home assignments had more written guidelines regarding style, skills, and content than did in-class exams. I then analyzed each assignment in terms of writing skills required or developed, using a matrix of ten skills at three levels developed within the WEC project previously (see Appendix A).
   a. At this point, I noted that the ten-skill matrix did not encompass two skills that repeated in multiple assignments:
      i. CREATIVE VOICE: Student writers should be able to employ or adopt a distinct voice, creative style, or inventive organization so that they might demonstrate a thoughtful and purposeful approach to the material, or, in some cases, an understanding of a specific authorial or historical voice or style. As this skill is often required at an intermediate level alongside the skills of argument, description, and historical contextualization, and might build up to but is not necessarily the same as VOICE/STAKES, this skill has been assigned the tag 4a.
      ii. REVISION: Student writers should be able to understand and incorporate suggestions from peers and instructors so that the revised versions presented offer increased clarity, nuance, and depth of analysis. This skill may be required at all levels, and therefore has been assigned the tag 3a.
3. Faculty interviews: I met with each current member of faculty, with the exception of Dr. Sinem Casale, to discuss my understanding of their assignments and to get a broader narrative about approaches to teaching writing at each level currently offered by the Art History Department (1xxx, 3xxx, 5xxx). Interviews were conducted between August 20th-September 16th, 2015.
4. In consultation with LATIS (Liberal Arts Technology and Information Services), I created a database that can be used to create graphic visualizations of assignments and writing skills within courses. See Appendix B for resultant graphic visualizations.

Senior project requirements and instruction:
1. Collecting data: I collected the following information for humanities departments across CLA:
   a. Number of required credit hours, and number of required credit hours at specific levels
   b. Credit hours of the Senior Project and a description of that course assignment (independent study, seminar-style, etc)
   c. Project options and requirements
   d. Number of senior majors in an average year
   e. Any additional guidelines given to students
2. Faculty interviews: While meeting individually with members of faculty regarding writing requirements, I also opened the discussion to a sharing of opinions about the general successes and failures of the senior project, hoping to elicit areas of marked or repeated frustration, opinions on the role of the one credit WEC course (ARTH 3971) as offered last year, the relationship between relevant advisers and instructors (possibly including the project adviser, the Director of Undergraduate Studies, the Undergraduate Adviser, and the
instructor for ARTH 3971), and suggested routes for future development in teaching, reviewing, and grading the senior projects.

3. Data analysis: Within this report, I will offer a two-part analysis of my findings, to include a breakdown of the ways Senior Projects are administered across comparative departments and a narrative analysis of faculty priorities, concerns, and requirements for future Senior Project administrative development.

**Part C: Trend Analysis of Writing Skills Developed at Three Levels of Curriculum**

In broad strokes, writing skills do increase in difficulty from one level to the next, with the most advanced skills of research and analysis occurring only occasionally at the 1xxx and 3xxx levels but in every course at the 5xxx level.

**1xxx Level:**
With the exception of the Freshman Seminar, intended to introduce more advanced skills in a small seminar setting, courses at the 1xxx level require at most skills 1-6. The four large-enrollment courses offered at the 1xxx level are survey courses, offering content across a long time period and/or broad geographic range. Instructors assess learning objectives through short papers and exams with slide identifications and/or short essay responses. With the exception of the Freshman Seminar, no classes at the 1xxx level require research (as covered in skills 7-10).

**3xxx Level:**
We see the most variation in skill requirements and assessment at the 3xxx level. Every class includes at least one assignment focused on visual analysis, usually with no or very limited research or integration of outside sources. Writing-intensive courses require review and revision of at least one paper; few other courses require formal revision. A few courses (3401, 3422, 3484, 3494) include one or several assignments specifically focused on critical reading skills and textual analysis, such as book reviews or essays comparing two article-length texts. With the exception of the Junior/Senior Seminar, no 3xxx level course requires an article-length research paper. Some require shorter versions of research papers with independent research; more common are short papers with circumscribed or limited research. A few classes require group projects with the expectation that research and analysis will be shared by group members.

**5xxx Level:**
Each of the 5xxx level courses offer or require a term paper with some original research. In some cases this requires an original research question, while in others a prompt or prompts are provided and textual sources include class readings. Approximately one-third include such a research paper as one of two options, with the alternate options similarly requiring skills of description, historical contextualization, argument, and synthesis/analysis of sources, but not requiring independent research. In many cases, the research paper options seem intended to provide an opportunity to develop a paper from which a Senior Project might stem. Visual analysis-focused assignments are not offered as frequently at the 5xxx level as at the 3xxx. Some courses require review and revision, while others offer it as an option and others do not explicitly offer review within course materials.

Related Appendices:

- Appendix A: Catalog of current course offerings with descriptions, assignments, and skills taught/required by each assignment
- Appendix B: Graphic visualizations of skill distribution across courses, levels, and types of assignment.
Part D: Narrative of Skills Prioritized at Three Levels of Curriculum

Broadly, skills prioritized within Art History fall into the categories of knowledge accumulation, inquiry/research, and analysis/writing. Perhaps unique to our discipline as compared to other humanities disciplines is the role visual literacy plays in each category. Comprehensive knowledge of the artwork, movements, and artists of a particular place and/or time period, the ability to develop research questions and perform primary and secondary source research, and the analysis and synthesis of argument and research in writing depend on skills of visual analysis, skills that, ideally, also develop and improve with time, practice, and development of writing skills. Universally, faculty across Art History expressed the primary importance of developing visual analysis skills at the lower (presumably earlier) levels of curriculum.

With the enrollment figures, faculty size, and course offerings of our department, we cannot expect students in a 3xxx level course to have taken a 1xxx level course previously. Therefore, when it comes to teaching the discipline-specific skills of visual analysis, we must often assume students are starting from scratch at the 3xxx level. Accordingly, there was consensus across the faculty that teaching visual analysis skills is of key importance at the 3xxx level. Most faculty, too, expressed a desire to have students examine a work of art in person, and therefore many 3xxx level courses require visual analysis on a work of art in a local collection.

Faculty also expressed interest in developing students as critical and engaged thinkers on the cultural themes elucidated in the frameworks of their courses. Dr. Cathy Asher, for instance, expressed a primary desire to guide students to think positively about Islam – an aim concerned with engagement in the cultural moment and milieu of 21st century America, and one which takes into account the broad demographics of the undergraduate population of the UMN. Dr. Jane Blocker, similarly, described one of her aims to be developing students as “citizens of the arts,” and therefore able to critically engage with key questions in the creation, funding, display, and purposes of art. Dr. Rick Asher expressed a desire to have students develop viewpoints on theoretical and cultural issues, with the goal of translating that engagement from the classroom to their greater social and political lives.

In a number of subfields within Art History, the introductory levels (1xxx and 3xxx) are also the place to develop a base of historical knowledge regarding the social, political, artistic, and cultural context of the time period or place. In these cases, an emphasis on developing foundational knowledge requires attention to terminology, chronology, key figures, and representative stylistic features. For instance, Dr. Matt Canepa, Dr. Steven Ostrow, and Dr. Roberta Bartoli all expressed the chief concern with instilling foundational knowledge especially at the 3xxx level in order to introduce more complex scholarly arguments at the 5xxx level. This often determines, therefore, the direction and format of exams and limits the level of engagement with scholarly texts in writing assignments.

For 5xxx level courses, faculty unanimously expressed a desire to introduce more complex arguments and scholarly research. A number of assignments focus on analysis of specific texts, such as book reviews, short papers and take home essays that require synthesis of a number of readings, and comparative essays examining and evaluating a pair or group of texts. A number of faculty expressed the difficulty of teaching 5xxx level courses to both upper-level undergraduates and graduate students, with awareness of the need to balance cultivating the independent research of graduate students with the guided research needs of undergraduates as well as modulate discussion and lecture to stimulate both and not overwhelm undergraduates.

The question of preparedness at the 5xxx level concerned most faculty. By and large, at the 5xxx level
students continue to have difficulty in choosing and narrowing topics, completing substantial independent research, and developing research questions and arguments rather than simply offering analysis. Ideal solutions to this problem range, and nearly unanimously come with caveats regarding the availability of faculty within the department to teach.

However, some thoughts for “ideal” solutions include:
· The development of a 4xxx level slate of courses
· A mandatory undergraduate methods course
· Increased seminar-style offerings
· Offering different “tracks” within a single 5xxx level course for undergrads and graduate students (or higher-level undergraduates ready for more of a challenge)
· Increase in 5xxx level courses across the board, to allow students more choice
· Requiring three 5xxx level courses for the major rather than the current two

Part E: Comparative Analysis of Senior Project Administration across CLA

In order to assess the feasibility of amendments to course offerings, especially the possibility of introducing 4xxx-level course, and to determine possible directions for administration of the senior project and the associated writing course (ARTH 3971), a closer look at the existing requirements for completing the major was required. A comparative analysis of requirements and senior project administration in a selection of departments across CLA allows for an understanding of where Art History stands in relation to similar departments in terms of required number of credits; methods, writing, or senior project courses offered; and required number of courses at each level. This also provides an understanding of the different ways a senior project might be administered and evaluated. CLA departments were chosen for their similarity in content, methods, and/or approaches, broadly speaking, rather than similarity in size.

Of the eleven departments analyzed, Art History is fairly average in terms of required number of credits, with 31: the fewest required number is 28, in Jewish Studies, and the greatest 36, in Chicano and Latino Studies. The mean average is 32.18 credits; the median is 32; the modes are 31 and 33. All departments had a required number of courses at the 3xxx or higher level; however, only four required a certain amount at the 4xxx or 5xxx level (ARTH: 2; CSCL: 2; GWSS: 3; AAAS: 1).

Two departments (History and CSCL) are in the process of restructuring their senior project administration and requirements; thus, they are not included in the following analysis. Of the nine remaining departments, four offer a seminar-style course directly related to the senior project (ARTH: 1 credit; AMST: 3 credits, taken in sequence with a 3 credit methods course; AIS: 3 credits; CHICANO: 3 credits when enough senior students are in the major at once). One (GWSS) attaches a one-credit independent study to a qualifying 4xxx or 5xxx level course; two others (RELS and JWST) offer that option or a four-credit independent study on its own. One (AAAS) offers a two-semester independent study, with 2 credits the first semester to develop the draft and 1 credit the second to make changes after review. Finally, one (ENG) offers a 4 credit topics seminar (ENGL) or 4 credit writing workshop (ENGW) or a two-semester honors thesis (4 credits total); within each, students develop a substantially new piece of work.

Based on the size of the Art History department, the directions taken by AMST or ENG are probably not achievable; however, the department might take under advisement the option of increasing the credit load of the senior project course to 3 credits. Further suggestions to follow in Parts F.
Related Appendices:

· Appendix C: Comparative data on eleven departments across CLA
· Appendix D: Documents outlining requirements and guidelines for the senior project provided by a selection of departments

Part F: Narrative Analysis of Senior Project Administration within Art History

Information in this section, as in Section D, was collected through interviews conducted between August 20th-September 16th, 2015, after the completion of the initial iteration of the Senior Project course (3971) in Spring 2015 but before any results could be assessed from the second, revised, iteration in Fall 2015. As such, a number of key concerns had been addressed by revisions to the course but perhaps not seen to fruition at the time of the interviews, including:

· Emphasis within the course instruction on involvement of the faculty adviser
· Four required advising reports to be turned in by the student over the course of the semester
· Increased content within the syllabus regarding the relationship of the course to the senior project as both a methodologies course and writing workshop/support group
· Adjusted deadlines to improve timing of penultimate draft, faculty adviser commentary, and revision before due date for final version

Thus, this section should be read with attention to the current ARTH 3971 syllabus, to the success of the Fall 2015 course, and to the memo written Dr. Jennifer Marshall detailing revisions made to the course through its beginning iterations. Additionally, the nature of a program of our size means that faculty members advise different numbers of students, both across the board and within a given semester or year, so that at the time of the interviews, some faculty members had advised students taking ARTH 3971 and some had not yet.

The most critical concern regarding the future administration of the senior project is the potential for decreased communication with and involvement of the faculty adviser in the face of the writing course (3971). A number of faculty members stated that implementation of the course does or runs the risk of taking primacy over the adviser/student relationship, and therefore emphasizing the style of writing over the substance of sub-field-specific content and context. For instance, Dr. Matt Canepa and Dr. Steven Ostrow both expressed the concern that students consider going to class one hour a week sufficient to fulfill their requirement, and thus it supplants the necessary one-on-one time between student and faculty adviser. Dr. Roberta Bartoli strongly cautioned against the evaluation of the senior project or the granting of any awards without the faculty adviser’s evaluation and suggestions. She, too, expressed concern that students are evaluated in the course on style without ever bringing their work to their adviser to discuss the work as a whole, including content and engagement with sub-field-specific sources and concerns. Within the second iteration of the course, required advising reports turned in by the students, clarification of the grade distribution between 3971 coursework and the faculty adviser’s grade on the final product, and adjustment of deadlines should alleviate these concerns. Dr. Gabe Weisberg stated strong apprehension against the idea of teaching toward a single specific outline, as that potentially flattens the many potential approaches to writing into one narrow method. Additionally, he expressed concern for the way imposing a course that potentially dilutes the importance of the faculty adviser can breed discontent within the department.

Dr. Michael Gaudio mentioned that differences across 5xxx level research paper requirements might also lead to differences in students’ approaches to the senior project. For instance, his 5xxx courses most often include a more contained research paper in which the research question is guided by a prompt and textual sources include assigned class readings, while in other courses a final paper might require an original research question
and original research. An advantage of a shorter or more constrained original paper would be the possibility of new directions for research and writing. In that way, some students might walk in excited to explore new avenues, while others may feel their papers offer less room for new research and writing. While he had not at that time supervised a student under the current system, he expressed support for the class, especially as a mechanism for creating support, regular check-ins, and momentum among students.

Similarly, Dr. Jane Blocker, who at the time of interviewing had not yet supervised a student under the current system but has at the time of writing this report, stated that the older system had many inefficiencies in bringing both student and faculty adviser to the same place in terms of meeting regularity and feedback and in offering support to students across the major who might begin at a variety of levels in terms of paper completion, skill, and interest in their topics. While the nature of the senior project includes a level of randomness, dependent as it is on availability of 5xxx level courses and of faculty advisers lining up with any particular student’s interest, bringing students together has the advantage of providing structure and keeping students more honest and on their toes. In a conversation in November 2015, Dr. Blocker stated that her experience with the ARTH 3971 course in Fall 2015 felt more like a collaborative partnership than overseeing senior projects in previous semesters.

Similarly, Dr. Jennifer Marshall emphasized the advantages of the course versus an individual approach for feedback, collaboration, and transparency. A 5xxx level paper that might be well known to the student and faculty adviser benefits from the feedback of the 3971 instructor and the student’s peers, and the revision process requires formal development of the skills required to implement and integrate new research, new challenges, and address questions adequately. The formalized structure provided by the course also provides clarity regarding deadlines and, ideally, helps students promote momentum in themselves and their peers.

One area for further discussion related to the ultimate purpose of the senior project. For instance, Dr. Jennifer Marshall suggested that an ongoing point of confusion is whether the department is framing the senior project as a “capstone” culmination of a student’s career or a “launch pad” into future research: a point of distinction that would guide evaluation. For what purpose is the project intended beyond simply a graduation requirement? Dr. Cathy Asher and Dr. Rob Silberman both recognized that many students are not aiming for graduate school, and each suggested that either the course or the project as a whole take that into account by offering tracks to develop key art historical skills toward other goals.

In the majority of instances, faculty argued or suggested that the future of a senior project writing course should not be tied intimately or directly to the development of the senior project itself. However, this is not unanimous, and still suggests a number of ways forward, ways that might be further developed by considering for what purposes the senior project might be completed. In many ways, the current format of the class emphasizes its importance as a complement to and facilitation of the senior project rather than a method to supplant the relationship between student and faculty adviser. Concerns regarding the primary importance of the student/adviser relationship continue to be addressed in the ongoing development of the course. Additionally, multiple faculty members expressed preference for a course that develops skills beyond the senior project; in some cases this preference is for a complete divorce between the two, but more commonly it is support for a space to develop multiple necessary writing skills with peer support. From its beginning, the writing course has encompassed some of those skills, and continues to develop as something that supports the senior project but works beyond it as well: a methods course; a place for creative writing skills; an opportunity to connect to archival or primary sources; a writing support group; a space for mastering multiple styles/types of writing (for presentations, grants, etc.); or a way of connecting writing skills to professionalization (how to talk about your research, how to write a personal statement).
Appendix D
Senior Project Course Public Presentation: Photos & Program
The University of Minnesota Art History Department:

Faculty

Catherine Asher, Professor, Islamic and South Asian art and architecture
Jane Blocker, Professor, Contemporary art and theory
Matthew Canepa, Professor, Art and archaeology of ancient Iran, Hellenistic Asia, and the Late Roman Empire
Sinem Cosak, Assistant Professor, Islamic art
Michael Gaudio, Professor, Visual arts in the early modern Atlantic world
Jennifer Marshall, Associate Professor, Arts and visual/material culture of the United States
Steven Ostrow, Professor, Baroque art
Robert Silberman, Associate Professor, Film studies and history of photography
Gabriel Weisberg, Professor, 19th century art, decorative and graphic arts

Visiting Faculty

Iwona Horacek, Visiting Assistant Professor, Medieval and Renaissance art
Georgiana Podulce, Visiting Assistant Professor, East Asian art
Sugata Ray, Visiting Assistant Professor, South Asian art

Staff

Cathlyn Carr, Student Office Specialist
Sara Enfield, Executive Office and Administrative Specialist
Erik Farseth, Associate Administrator
Peter Harle, Undergraduate Academic Advisor

To our graduating seniors, the entire Department of Art History extends a hearty congratulations and best wishes for an artful future!
Seniors in Art History

Herin Ahn  Advisor: Dr. Jane Blocker

Ahn graduates in May with a B.A. in Art History. At the U, she was both a tour guide and curatorial intern at Weisman Art Museum, a meaningful experience for her. Ahn plans to pursue graduate school and a career in the arts.

Maggie C. Benson  Advisor: Dr. Jennifer Marshall
Senior Thesis: “Sex Work and Striptease: A Look at Female Sexuality through the Paintings of John Sloan and Edward Hopper”

Benson graduates in May with a B.A. in Art History. This year, she served as Chief Art Editor and Design Manager for Ivory Tower, the U’s Undergraduate Art & Literary Magazine. Her ultimate goal is to pursue a career in museum management or publishing, publish a literary magazine with friends, own a pug named Rodney and climb Denali.

Kristina Schroeder  Advisor: Dr. Ivana Horacek
Senior Thesis: “Splinter: Displaying Identity through Patronage of Musical Instruments”

Schroeder graduates in May with a B.A. in Art History. This summer she begins working as an Applied Behavioral Therapist, while transitioning to graduate school for Occupational Therapy in the fall.

Maggie Schuster  Advisor: Dr. Catherine Asher

Schuster graduates in May with a B.A. in Art History and a Minor in Gender, Women & Sexuality Studies. Schuster plans to attend graduate school in 2018, to further interests in Mughal art & recuperative history.

Emma Shope  Advisor: Dr. Steven Ostrow
Senior Thesis: “Political Patronage: Gift Giving for Personal Gain”

Shope graduates in May with a B.A. in Art History. As an avid francophone, she plans on taking a summer class in French communication, literature and grammar, and then exploring French culture abroad in 2018.
Se Kyung Ock  
Advisor: Dr. Jane Blocker  
*Senior Thesis: “Andrea Fraser’s Transcendental Institutional Critique”*

Ock graduates in December with a B.A. in Art History and a Minor in Philosophy. With broad scholarly interests ranging from modern and contemporary art to Continental philosophy to psychoanalysis, Ock intends on pursuing graduate school and a career in academia.

Teaghan Persons  
Advisor: Dr. Steven Ostrow  
*Senior Thesis: “The Art Collection of Queen Christina”*

Persons graduates in May with a B.A. in Art History and Studio Art with an emphasis in Painting. While she looks forward to a summer of traveling, reading and painting, Persons will also contemplate graduate school and a career in the arts.

Caitlyn Carr  
Advisor: Dr. Jennifer Marshall  

Carr graduates in May with a B.A. in Art History and a Minor in Cultural Studies & Comparative Literature. At the Welsman Art Museum, she served as a tour guide and as WAM Collective Communications Chair. Carr interned at Katherine E. Nash Gallery and worked as the Art History Dept., Student Office Specialist. Carr wants to get her graduate degree in Art or Museum Education.

Shelbi Faille  
Advisor: Dr. Steven Ostrow  
*Senior Thesis: “Restoring the Soul of Rome: On Architectural Relics and Their Bodily Metaphor”*

Faille graduates in July with a B.A. in Art History. Next year she will return to tutoring immigrants as a volunteer and looks forward to participating again more fully in our diverse community. Faille is applying to law school for admission in Fall 2018.
Jacquelyn Gmitzerko  Advisor: Dr. Steven Ostrow

Gmitzerko graduates in May 2018, with a B.A. in Art History, History and Spanish. She received the Presidential Student Leadership and Service Award for advocating for sexual misconduct procedures on campus. Last year Gmitzerko interned at the Sephardic Museum in Spain and curated part of the Weisman Art Museum’s exhibition, The Beautiful Brain. She will further her research interests next year in Rome.

Monika Hetzler  Advisor: Dr. Jane Blocker
Senior Thesis: “Pushpamala N and the Context of Ethnographic Photography”

Hetzler graduates in May with a B.A. in Art History. In spring 2016, she studied in Florence, Italy, and held an internship at Cartavetra, a contemporary art gallery. Inspired by her studies, Hetzler would like to work as a curator to improve accessibility and representation in museums.

Devon Lee  Advisor: Dr. Ivana Horacek

Lee graduates in May with a B.A. in Art History, a Minor in Medieval Studies and a B.F.A. in Studio Art. Lee wants to become a book and paper conservator with a focus on Medieval manuscripts and their materials.

Yichen Ling  Advisor: Dr. Jane Blocker
Senior Thesis: “Readymades in Response to the Wenchuan Earthquake”

Ling graduates in December with a B.A. in Art History. While taking a year to work and travel before deciding upon her career track, Ling wants to see more artwork around the world and become fully trilingual in Chinese, English and Korean.
Appendix E

Screen Shots of Art History Writing Resources Web Page

1. Prewriting

Looking at a blank page can be scary. Check out some of these resources if you are having difficulty figuring out how to start writing.

- Graphic Organizers/How Charts can be useful tools for organizing and creating your argument. However, use your developing skills as a college writer to move away from the strict structure of a five paragraph essay, which graphic organizers often encourage.

- Paragraph Graphic Organizer

- Essay Graphic Organizer

- Making a Writing Plan

- How To Do Things With Pictures

Harvard College’s Guide for Developing an Argument and Making an Outline

Model Outlines from Purdue Owl,

Advice on choosing a topic, taking notes, and making an outline from Sylvan Stetem

2. Writing a Thesis Statement

- UMD’s Art History Department: Thesis Self-Evaluation Worksheet

- Sample Thesis and Its Organization

- Quick Tips for Writing a Thesis (Example of a U. of Minnesota’s "Thesis with Restrictions"

- Harvard College: "Developing a Thesis"

- Indiana University: "How to Write a Thesis Statement"

- Indiana University pamphlet: "How to Write a Thesis Statement"
3. Writing a Visual Analysis Paper (a.k.a Formal Analysis Paper)

- Pre-Writing Activity for a Visual Analysis Paper
- How to Create a Visual Analysis Paper
- Visual Analysis Example

If you are new to art history and its vocabulary “Looking and Describing Art” is very helpful, it can help guide you through how to analyze and discuss the subject matter of a work of art and how to describe its formal elements. It also discusses some of the major principals of design (rhythm, repetition, balance, etc.).

- Looking and Describing Art
- The Steps of Writing a Visual Analysis from Note-Taking to Outlining

“Name, Describe, and Interpret/Discuss” provides a series of questions you can ask yourself in order to better analyze and describe a piece of art. It also has an outline for how to properly turn your observations into a paper.

- In A Visual Analysis Paper Give Identifiers, Describe, and Interpret/Discuss
- UMN's Art History Department: Visual Description and Interpretation Self-Evaluation
- Additional Sources for Finding Help on Writing Visual Analysis

4. Writing a Research Paper

- Writing About Art (Complete Overview)
- Writing a Research Proposal (If you do not have to do it for your course. Creating one will help you narrow down your research topic and help you organize your research. It is a very helpful step in the writing process.)
- UMN's Art History Department: Sample Paper Proposal

Every research paper you write and many examinations you take will include some portion in which you need to summarize and engage critically with the literature published on the topic you're addressing. This document helps you learn how to master this skill.

- UMN's Art History Department: Essays Assignment
- How to Write a Thesis (Summary)

Zotero is a standalone software program that works with Firefox, Chrome and Safari. It allows users to:
- Create a database of citations by easily selecting items from your browser
- Attach and organize your PDFs
- Sync your database to the web
- Share group licenses with others
- Create bibliographies in a variety of styles.

- Link to Download Zotero
- How to Use Zotero

5. Writing Mechanics and Style

- "Metabases Were Made": Avoiding the Passive Voice by Jane Blocker (Video)

This is an extensive guide on writing. Pay particular attention to the chapters “Simplistic”, “Style”, “The Audience”, “Words”, and “Tips and Pieces”.

- Zineser On Writing (Video)
- The FIPs below explain correct grammar usage of commas, possessive apostrophes, foreign phrases, colons, clauses, and other tricky elements of grammar.
- Common Mistakes in Grammar
- Common Mistakes in Grammar: Common
- How to Avoid the Passive Voice (With Zombies)

The Chicago Manual of Style is the accepted style guide in art history. However, it doesn't always have answers to all of art history's burning questions. "Should I capitalize Futurism?" "Do I italicize exhibition titles or put them in italics?"

- The Association of Art Editors Style Guide

6. Citation and Formatting

Correctly citing and formatting a paper is very important if you want to get an A on most papers. Check out these resources to make sure you are citing sources correctly.

- CiteBys by Jane Blocker (Video)

Citation Resources

- KnightCite: A Citation Generator
- Guide To Creating an Image Caption
- Model Image Captions with Source information
- Guide to Creating Notes and a Bibliography
- Guide for Using and Formatting Citations and Quotations

This is a condensed version of Chicago Manual of Style. The complete Chicago Manual of Style is available both in print and online through UMN Libraries.

- Chicago-Style Quick Citation Guide
- Model Paper that has Chicago Formatting
- Purdue OWL Guide for Chicago Manual of Style

Formatting Resources

- UMN: Quick Formatting Tips Specific to Art History Papers

If the link in the document below is not helping you, try using Google to find directions specific to your version of word and/or your operating system.

- Help with Word's Microsoft Features (Page Numbers, Hanging Indents, Citations)
7. Editing, Revising, Peer- and Self-Review
Your rough draft is complete, these resources can help you figure out what the next steps are in the writing process.
- A Self-Revision Checklist
- UMinn's Art History Department: Visual Description and Interpretation Self-Evaluation
- Revision Outlining a Self-Evaluation Technique
- Howard College's Tips on Self-Revision Part One
- Howard College's Tips for Self-Revision Part Two
- UMinn's Revision Checklist
- UMinn's Editing and Proofreading Strategies
- A Checklist for Peer Review
- What Takes Priority in Editing

8. Abstracts & Proposals
- Professor Marzahn's Paper Proposal Guidelines
- How to Write an Abstract
- Professor Marzahn's "How to Write an Off-Grid Abstract"
- Written Statement - For Research Projects in the Humanities

9. Sample Papers
- Exemplary Introductory Art History Writing
- Mark Lewis: Court Painter of the Kennedy Era by Alexander Hammer
- Exhibition talk: To Make a World with someone, Alexander Hammer
- Exemplary Student Art Writing

Art History Writing Resources for Faculty
VI. WEC Writing Plan Requests  

Financial Requests (requests cannot include faculty salary support) drop-down choices will appear when cell next to "semester" is selected.

Total Financial Request: **$24,336.00**

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<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
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<tr>
<td>Summer RA</td>
<td>$6,000.00</td>
<td>25% Graduate Student RA, Salary and fringe</td>
<td>$9,168.00</td>
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</table>

Rationale for costs and their schedule of distribution

We seek the support of a Graduate Student RA to help us (1) coordinate our service requests to shape a meaningful intervention into department instructional culture, (2) translate the ephemeral nature of workshops and consultations into a more durable suite of resources and tools, which can be made accessible through our writing resources website, (3) help migrate our existing writing resources website from Moodle to either Canvas or Google Sites, and (4) help interface with graduate students as we develop our TA training module.

Service Requests: drop-down choices will appear when cell in the "service" column is selected.

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<th>Qty</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Workshop</td>
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<td>Workshop</td>
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</table>

Description and rationale for services

We anticipate staging four workshops in AY2018-19, to address teaching challenges in art history, especially those that relate to either concerns expressed by our current faculty (e.g., foreign students, persistent mechanical errors), or deficits identified in assessments (e.g., argument, voice). These workshops will translate into more durable resources and tools for use in the foreseeable future. In subsequent years, we anticipate staging at least one workshop per year (ideally one per semester), to ensure sustainability and innovation moving forward.
January 18, 2018

To: Jane Blocker
    Jennifer Marshall
From: Robert McMaster, Office of Undergraduate Education
Subject: Decision regarding WEC plan funding proposal

The Department of Art History recently requested the following funding to support its Writing Enriched Curriculum:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Summer RA</th>
<th>$</th>
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<tr>
<td>Summer 2018</td>
<td></td>
<td>6,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2018</td>
<td>25% Graduate Student RA, salary and fringe</td>
<td>9,168.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring 2019</td>
<td>25% Graduate Student RA, salary and fringe</td>
<td>9,168.00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>24,336.00</td>
</tr>
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</table>

All items above have been approved by the Office of Undergraduate Education, for a total of $24,336.00.

Please email Pat Ferrian (ferri004@umn.edu) and Heidi Solomonson (heidis@umn.edu) within 30 days of the receipt of this letter with the EFS account string in your department that will receive these funds. [Pat will transfer all funds in FY19]

CC: Dan Emery, Pat Ferrian, Pamela Flash, Erin Flathmann, Matt Luskey, Bryan Mosher, Jennifer Reckner, Rachel Rodrigue, Leslie Schiff, Heidi Solomonson