

**Guidelines for Evaluating Academic Performance in the Visual Arts
Department of Art Practice, UCB
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The creative production of visual artists working in any medium (e.g., painting, sculpture, printmaking, photography, video, new media, or performance) should be considered equivalent to all other established forms of academic research. As in any field, peers are the best judges of any individual artist's performance. When making evaluations for appointments, promotions, and merit increases, the criteria of judgment are necessarily different in the visual arts from traditional academic research, but the standards of quality and professionalism are just as high.

Before any review is conducted it is the responsibility of the candidate to prepare a detailed statement outlining the creative work, teaching, and service completed and the honors and awards received since the last review. The statement should also include a discussion of work in progress. The candidate must discuss each project's context, motivation, innovative aspects, and conceptual and formal challenges. The candidate must also articulate how the work contributes to the candidate's personal growth and how it augments, challenges, or transforms the field generally. For collaborative work, the responsibilities and contributions of the candidate must be spelled out in detail and distinguished from those of the collaborator(s). The candidate must also highlight the importance of the venue(s) where the work was presented, the significance of the exhibition's conception, the substance of any accompanying printed or digital material (such as wall texts, video presentations, or catalogues), and the critical reception in the popular and scholarly media. An account of undergraduate and graduate students whom the candidate has mentored closely and who have gone on to do significant creative work in the field should also be included. It is also the responsibility of the candidate to submit a current curriculum vitae, complete bio-bibs, and copies of all printed and digital material about the candidate and the candidate's work since the last review. Finally, the candidate must prepare a full and representative sample of the work being submitted for review in an easily viewable format, preferably DVDs, but photographs, slides, or CD ROMs are also acceptable; if the review requires confidential outside letters (such as a tenure review), then multiple copies must be provided, one for each referee solicited by the department (usually about ten).

Museums, art centers, and galleries are the most typical sites for the presentation of artistic production, but cinema, television, radio, and the World Wide Web are becoming increasingly important venues for video art, sound art, and new media. In general, solo exhibitions carry more weight than group shows (although solo shows are rare for new media artists); juried or invitational exhibits are more important than open ones; screenings on national television or presentations on national radio rank higher than on regional stations or local cinemas; and the presentation of new work trumps previously exhibited work. Museums and art

centers are usually more prestigious than commercial galleries, and museums and art centers can be ranked on an ascending scale of importance depending on whether they are of local, regional, state, national, or international stature. A transatlantic or transpacific show generally reveals more about an artist's relevance with respect to other cultures and traditions than a purely local or regional exhibition. Similarly, exhibits outside of an artist's typical venue, such as a painter's work appearing within a theatrical context, or a new media artist's presentation at a scientific conference, can be indicative of the work's broader cultural relevance. Finally, a show that travels to several venues or a video, sound, or new media work that receives multiple screenings or presentations is generally considered more significant than a work that is exhibited only once.

But, within these general guidelines there can be many exceptions, which is the responsibility of the faculty, outside reviewers (if required), and the chair to evaluate on a case by case basis. For example, a small group show of distinguished artists organized around a provocative theme by a major curator with a critical catalogue might be far more significant than a large solo exhibition. Or a sculpture commissioned for a public space or a mural for a public building might have a more lasting impact than an exhibition. Or a new media work or a performance presented in an unconventional locale might be as significant as a major exhibition in an important museum. It should also be noted that collaborative work, especially a collaborative work that results in a single homogeneous product, can often be far more challenging and time consuming than work produced alone. In such cases, each collaborator should receive full or nearly full credit for the work.

In general, the presentation of new work in a group exhibition is roughly equal to a scholarly article. The expected norm is one or two group exhibitions a year.

A large solo show of new work is approximately equivalent to the publication of a book of scholarship. One every three to five years is the expected norm.

A retrospective exhibition of a single artist's work occurs rarely and generally only toward the end of a distinguished career. Depending on the range of works exhibited, the significance of the venue(s), the reputation of the curator, and the quality of the catalogue essays, this can be a very special event in an artist's career, similar to the honoring of a distinguished scholar with a *festschrift*.

Many artists also publish or edit written work that should be judged like any other written work. Such writing might include technical manuals or books; scholarly articles on critical theory, pedagogy, or art history; artists' statements and catalogue entries; or online reviews. Artists' creative art books, web sites, and interviews also can be important sources for evaluating the work and stature of an artist. Often visual artists are asked to give public presentations or demonstrations about aspects of their work (or, less often, the work of other artists) at universities, art schools, museums, art centers, festivals, or concerts as well as on

radio and television shows. These should be considered equivalent to the papers presented by traditional academics and evaluated according to the importance of the venue and the audience. Invitations to artistic residencies and workshops, often during the summer and in national and international venues, are equal in importance to invitations to conferences and research centers for traditional academics.

Any evaluation of an artist must also consider writings about the artist and printed or digital reproductions of the artist's work. A mere mention of an artist in an exhibition review is not as significant as a critical evaluation. A discussion of the significance of an artist within the context of a medium or a larger period normally would be more important than a critique of a single show. The reputation of the author (whether critic or art historian) also has to be weighed. So too does the nature of the publication and the stature of the publisher: articles in local or regional newspapers and journals would normally count less than those of national prominence; newspaper and journal articles, less than scholarly catalogues or books; and catalogue entries, less than critical essays. In any publication, numerous large scale illustrations in color are obviously more significant than small black and white reference reproductions. An artist's work featured on the cover of a book or catalogue or on a poster advertising an exhibition also tells much about artistic stature and reputation. In short, since the presentation (layout, color, scale, and placement) of an artist's work within the larger context of printed catalogues, books, or digital formats is itself significant, it is important that the faculty and the budget committee reviewers evaluate entire catalogues, books, or digital records and not just photocopies or excerpts taken from them. Finally, the number of works purchased or commissioned by institutions or individuals as well as their stature should also be used as criteria of judgment.

The evaluation of an artist's teaching, service, honors, and awards is identical to that of any academic. However, it should be noted that artists devote considerable out-of-classroom hours many times a year to giving critiques of student work whether undergraduate majors, honors students, or graduate students. These critiques are roughly equivalent to the time other academics spend reading exams and papers.

These criteria have been in place for over five decades and are followed by the major universities and art schools through the United States.