

**MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM**  
**Campus Reports**

**The University of Montana Western**

2008-09 Program Years

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List of the programs reviewed:

- 1) Department of Fine Arts (Visual Arts Program) BA Option**
- 2) Department of English BA Option**

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Decision(s) concerning the future of the program(s), based on the program review criteria established at the campus:

- 1) Department of Fine Arts (Visual Arts Program) BA Option: The program should continue, both in support of general education and the early childhood, elementary, and secondary education majors, and in recruiting, educating, and graduating visual arts majors.**
- 2) Department of English BA Option: The department should continue to produce majors, as well as to support developmental writers, the general education program, and the education majors.**

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Rationale or justification for the decision based on the program review process established at the campus. Include graduation numbers and student majors for each of the last seven (7) years for every program under review.

**1) Department of Fine Arts (Visual Arts Program) BA Option: Through the seven-year review process, the program faculty agreed to revisit their curriculum for majors with the intent of narrowing the range of art skills offered so that they fit the expertise of the current faculty (thus eliminating jewelry-making and artistic blacksmithing, for example), and so as to enable students to pursue their choices among drawing, painting, printmaking, ceramics, sculpture, and glass into depth through greater immersion in upper division course offerings. Unfortunately, the departure of the program chair and the absence of a second faculty on sabbatical have delayed the curriculum revision process. The process will begin again in Spring, 2010. In the meantime, the visual arts faculty have agreed to be more proactive in recruiting potential majors among students demonstrating high levels of achievement in visual arts general education courses. This strategy, combined with the program's access to visual arts scholarships provided by the Emerick family through the Montana Western Foundation, seems to be having a positive effect on the number of visual arts majors, though the data will not be definitive until the end of spring, 2010.**

**2) Department of English BA Option: The seven-year program review precipitated discussions among department faculty regarding support for developmental writers and curriculum revision to reflect the**

expertise of the current faculty. Faculty agreed to continue offering linked courses for developmental writers (combining the developmental writing course with the basic college writing course) as initial learning outcomes assessment suggests that the linked course strategy, which facilitates immersive writing practice for seven weeks, is effective. Further, faculty agreed to revise their major, making it more attractive by offering thematic and topical courses, in addition to chronologically-organized courses. Finally, department faculty agreed to an egalitarian rotation to teach the introductory writing course and general education English courses with the intention of exposing students to the entire English faculty. The intent of the above is to increase the number of English majors, and early indications suggest that the strategy is paying off. Again, we will not have definitive data until the end of spring 2010.

**TABLE 1: Number of Visual Arts and English Majors and Graduates, 1999-2008**

| Degree Type/Major     | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|-----------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Visual Arts Majors    | 45   | 48   | 50   | 46   | 43   | 43   | 38   | 32   | 26   | 29   |
| Visual Arts Graduates | 7    | 6    | 7    | 13   | 10   | 7    | 12   | 6    | 5    | 7    |
| English Majors        | 52   | 54   | 57   | 59   | 53   | 50   | 50   | 38   | 31   | 36   |
| English Graduates     | 11   | 10   | 11   | 5    | 9    | 12   | 5    | 10   | 6    | 13   |

Explanation of Table: Numbers of majors in each program have recently declined, despite the overall increase in the size of Montana Western's student population. Nevertheless, the number of majors in each program remain adequate to graduate more than five students per year. Indeed, the ten-year average for Visual Arts graduates is eight per year, while that for English is 9.2 per year.