

- Who Invited the Librarian?

Studio Critiques as a Site of
Information Literacy Education

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● IN THE NEXT 15 MINUTES

○ Studio Critiques: Connecting the Framework

Librarian Participation in Studio Critiques

School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts University (SMFA)

Northern Illinois University (NIU) School of Art & Design

Advantages

Challenges

Suggestions



STUDIO CRITIQUES AS ART EDUCATION

“Critiques are successful when the student leaves the experience better informed, slightly more literate in the language of criticism and aesthetic analysis, and a stronger artist.”

Barrett, Terry, “Studio Critiques of Student Art: As They Are, As They Could be with Mentoring” *Theory into Practice* 39, no. 1 (Winter 2000): 32.

STUDIO CRITIQUES: CONNECTING THE FRAMEWORK

Studio Critique Elements ¹	Scholarship As Conversation ²
A student who is working on/has completed a piece must be “present, ready, and willing to enter into a conversation. ”	Disposition: “Understand the responsibility that comes with entering the conversation through participatory channels.”
Suggestions may be offered by critique participants “for revisions or alternate approaches, both intellectual and material.”	Knowledge Practice: “Critically evaluate contributions made by others in participatory information environments.”
The student’s practice and results are “situated in relation to historical and contemporary art world contexts.”	Knowledge Practice: “Identify the contribution particular articles, books, and other scholarly pieces make to disciplinary knowledge.”

1. Mers, Adelheid. “Adapting Techniques of Studio Critique for Arts Management Pedagogy.” *The Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society* 43 (2013): 90
2. “Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education.” Association of College and Research Libraries, February 2, 2015, <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework>



LIBRARIAN PARTICIPATION IN CRITIQUES: CASE STUDIES

School of the Museum of Fine Arts (SMFA)
at Tufts University

Northern Illinois University (NIU)
School of Art and Design

● SMFA AT TUFTS

○ SETTING THE SCENE

SMFA Library: Fine Arts branch

Liaison to SMFA undergraduate programs

INFORMATION LITERACY AT THE SMFA

Practice

First-year composition & Senior Thesis

Curriculum Committee

Philosophy

Demystify research

Embrace & tame the chaos

Metacognition

SMFA AT TUFTS: SNAPSHOT OF RECENT CRIT PARTICIPATION

Spring 2017 painting course

Mid-semester crits, individual research consultations, final crits

Total time commitment:

11 hours

Fall 2017 metals course

Artists' book exploration, individual research consultations, final crits

Total time commitment:

12 hours

Fall 2017 wet media course

Helped design research-based assignment, IL session, mid-semester crits

Total time commitment:

10.5 hours

Fall 2017 Senior Thesis

Final crits, caps a year-long embedded relationship that will continue next semester

Total time commitment:

lots

● NIU SCHOOL OF ART & DESIGN

○ SETTING THE SCENE

UG & Grad interdisciplinary degree programs (Art, Art History, Art Ed)

BFA & MFA in studio art disciplines

No formal info lit component in these programs

INFORMATION LITERACY AT NIU

Evolving faculty collaboration

From course-integrated to program curriculum-embedded

- Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced (2 courses), & Senior Project

NIU SCHOOL OF ART & DESIGN: SNAPSHOT OF RECENT CRIT PARTICIPATION

Advanced Photographic Media

Involvement: reading list/cornell notes, 2 library sessions, mid-semester crits

- Session 1: Multidisciplinary research as a source of inspiration
- Crit Participation: “How did your research impact or influence this work?”
- Session 2: Strategic searching

Total time commitment: 12-14 hours



CONNECTING CRITS TO RESEARCH

“[K]nowledge of the world and culture can only enrich you--whether literature, scientific study, personal experiences, or travel. Knowledge of historical and contemporary practice places you in a larger, stimulating conversation” (90).

-Kendall Buster and Paula Crawford, *The Critique Handbook: The Art Student's Sourcebook and Survival Guide*, 2nd edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2010.



ADVANTAGES

Meaningful interaction

Authentic assessment

Collection development

Enriched teaching practice



CHALLENGES

Logistics

Faculty buy-in

Learning to crit



Suggestions

Just ask!

Clarify your role

It's assessment!

Part of the instruction menu

THANK YOU! + FURTHER READING

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Barrett, Terry, "Studio critiques of student art: as they are, as they could be with mentoring,"
Theory into Practice

Garcia, Larissa, and Ashley Peterson. "Who invited the librarian? Studio critiques as a site of
information literacy education." Art Libraries Journal

Kendall Buster and Paula Crawford, *The critique handbook: the art student's sourcebook and
survival guide*, 2nd edition

Mers, Adelheid "Adapting techniques of studio critique for arts management pedagogy," The
Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society

Petraits, Ellen. "Assessing the impact of library instruction on studio-based research:
developing a qualitative model." Art Libraries Journal