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What If They Believed Us? How Well Prepared Are Art Educators to Deliver on the Promises of Art Education?

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This article raises questions about the breadth and depth of content-area expertise in initial licensure programs for art teachers, K–12. An analysis of some of the promises made in the name of art education suggests that art teachers need a high level of expertise and deep understanding of art in order to deliver on these promises. To consider the odds of teacher preparation reflecting that depth, a study of art teacher preparation in the state of Maryland is used as an example of what may be the case in that state and may also reflect preparation elsewhere. Course requirements in the content area of art for all of Maryland's state-approved and nationally accredited programs for undergraduate and graduate certification are reported. The article concludes by posing ten questions to institutions of higher education, national accreditation agencies, and national leadership concerned with policy in art education.

Keywords: accreditation standards, art education, certification standards, teacher preparation

Art educators have spent decades struggling to articulate the value of an education in the visual arts to the public, as well as to colleagues in the broader field of education (Stankiewicz 2001; National Art Education Association [NAEA] 2009a). In 2009, calling on a number of experts from within the field of art education, educational assessment, and social commentary, the leadership of the National Art Education Association (NAEA) constructed an advocacy resource to frame the organization's vision for art education entitled *Learning in a Visual Age* (NAEA 2009a). Available on the NAEA Web site, the document proposes that the visual arts are of "critical importance" in a "flat" world (Friedman 2008) and a visual age in which "aesthetics and creativity are just as important as technical knowledge in the new economy" (NAEA 2009a, 3). Integration has become the new specialty, and the report asserts that a new premium has been placed on abilities that visual arts education is said to develop, such as visual spatial abilities, reflection, and experimentation. *Learning in a Visual Age* also references prior research that suggests that the arts teach "a remarkable array of mental habits not emphasized elsewhere in schools, including observing, envisioning, innovating, and reflecting" (Hetland et al. 2007). As

well, visual arts instruction is said to "develop young people's sense of civic engagement," "stimulate or release imagination by bringing into existence an alternative 'reality,'" and make possible "social interaction with a global virtual critical community" (NAEA 2009a, 4–6). Given the scope of such claims, as Constance Gee (1999) puts it, the sum of our arguments begins to sound like, "For you, dear, anything!" What if the schools really took us up on the promises we have been making? Are art educators sufficiently prepared to deliver the kind and quality of education that we have promised we can offer in our increasingly higher-reaching claims?

Perhaps with good reason, the NAEA document qualifies the claims that have been made for the value of the visual arts in education by saying:

Effective teaching requires a substantial amount of expertise. It requires teaching by a skilled and experienced professional with extensive arts content background, a range of pedagogical approaches, and the patience and persistence to turn small advantages and unexpected events into major breakthroughs in learning. It requires the teaching of an arts education professional who is a continual learner throughout his or her career, and one who is an active member of the art, education, and art-education communities. (2009a, 9)

However, the NAEA may need to go further and qualify the expertise needed, as a 2009 *Washington Post* article

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circulated online declared forthrightly, under the headline “The Problem with School Art Programs Are Teachers Who ‘Can Barely Draw’” (Levy 2009) While art educators gasped at the damaging words, the statement resonated with those of us who have long felt we are underpreparing the majority of candidates who set out to teach art in the schools. I began to wonder about the state of art teacher preparation today, given more than twenty-five years of influence on the field from the Getty Foundation, whose efforts have asserted the importance of art history, criticism, and aesthetics and diminished the role of studio practice. Furthermore, I wondered what might be changing, given recent calls for more meaningful engagement with art making (Simpson et al. 1998; Walker 2001).

In 1997, the Getty Foundation sponsored a symposium to “discuss the challenge of improving art teacher preparation programs” (Day 1997). At that time, no database from which to examine teacher preparation existed. Thus, the Foundation commissioned a series of data-gathering reports that were subsequently published by the NAEA as a volume entitled *Preparing Teachers of Art* (Day 1997); these data provide valuable background for this article. Comparison of data from 1997 with my 2009 study reported herein suggests that little has changed over the course of more than a decade, and it is quite possible that art teacher education has relied on the same structure of requirements for much longer. Perhaps the time has come to take yet another look at the state of art teacher preparation.

First, I need to qualify my point of view. I have the rare opportunity to work with a rather select group of teacher candidates in a top tier professional school of art. All of these students have an extensive background in both studio art and art history totaling some 90 credits altogether. After they complete their preparation for initial certification, the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) degree requires, at minimum, another 35 credits, mostly in the area of art education, or as many as 60 credits combining art education with additional studio and art history. Beyond this preparation program, I oversee two additional professional development programs and have spent some twenty years looking at portfolios of art teachers applying for admission to these graduate programs. Having served as a reader for the Advanced Placement (AP) art exam, an open-ended portfolio assessment designed to assess high school work for foundation-level college credit, I have observed firsthand that many applicants lack the kind of concentrated investigations required for a passing score. Finally, I also run MICA’s Summer Teacher Institute that has allowed me the opportunity to take a closer look at both how early and mid-career art educators are teaching and their progress in moving their practice to a higher level as a result of a studio-based professional development program (Carroll 2009).

These experiences, plus many years of working in the schools as an arts coordinator and, later, as a supervisor of student teaching, have left me feeling that our promises in

the art education community might well exceed our capacity to deliver. This is not to say that the arguments we use on behalf of the field do not make sense. They resonate with us because we want to believe that they are attainable—and, in many ways, they are. Yet I see persistent signs that education practice is dominated by a mimetic approach wherein young people are invited to emulate master artists, and in which the emphasis on product mitigates more open-ended or inquiry-based explorations and affords little room for experimentation and risk-taking. I am not even convinced that many art teachers encourage a “creative” process in themselves or their students. Thus, I believe it is important to ask if future teachers of art are being prepared in a way that leads them to experience and understand at a deep level what teaching for visual spatial abilities, reflection, and experimentation or other claims might entail.

I would like to start this inquiry with a look at some of the promises we are making and an investigation of the level of expertise that is needed to deliver on them. I will then take data from my home state of Maryland as a case study on course requirements in studio, art history, and art education methods that are typical of undergraduate and graduate level preparation. With some additional insights from our summer teacher institute, I will identify some of the factors that have shaped and defined the development of content-area expertise in art. Finally, I will pose critical questions for consideration by state-level teacher certification and program approval divisions; accreditation agencies; deans in education and the arts who oversee preparation programs; faculty in higher education who teach studio, art history, and art education courses; and policymakers in national organizations.

PROMISES MADE IN THE NAME OF ART EDUCATION

Lessons the Arts Teach

Quite likely, the single most quoted and referenced articulation of the benefits of art education is Elliot Eisner’s “10 Lessons the Arts Teach” (Eisner 2002). The list is both sophisticated in its articulation, resonating well with art educators, and clear and precise enough to be intelligible to a much broader audience. In brief, Eisner claims that the arts provide lessons about making judgments, finding solutions and answers, celebrating multiple perspectives, engaging with complex forms of problem solving, understanding that words and numbers do not define the limits of cognition, attending to subtleties, thinking through materials and images, learning what can be said with images that words cannot, discovering through experience, and understanding that what adults believe is important. Since its first appearance, Eisner’s list of ten reasons has been frequently reproduced and, more recently, has been posted on the lead page of the NAEA Web site, where it is available free for downloading.

At first glance, these lessons may appear to be easy to deliver. Yet Eisner (2002) is always pointing to something more nuanced, more sophisticated. His descriptors are qualified. He emphasizes qualitative judgments over rules, multiple answers and interpretations, complex forms of problem solving, processes that allow for unanticipated possibilities and thinking through material, attention to subtleties, and the discovery of personal feelings and poetic capabilities. It should follow, then, that a teacher's studio preparation and art knowledge should have been sufficient to learn those lessons, and that evidence of such qualities and understandings should be visible in their own studio work and reflections.

A Whole New Mind

When Daniel Pink's *A Whole New Mind: Why Right-Brainers Will Rule the Future* (2005) became a bestseller worldwide, it ignited a sense of hope in the field of art education. Pink was invited to deliver an address at the annual NAEA conference in 2007 that further excited art educators with his articulation of the six R-directed aptitudes that he found most critical to success. Pink uses the phrase "R-directed aptitudes" to describe what was previously assumed to be thinking originating from the right side of the brain. His focus on developing the six aptitudes of design, storytelling, symphony, empathy, play, and meaning caused visions of the arts moving to the center of the curriculum to dance in arts educators' heads. Again, these aptitudes and lessons seemed so naturally connected with the visual arts that few asked if these aptitudes are actually cultivated in the preparation of art teachers.

The Framework for 21st Century Learning

Another current document from the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2007) has recently captured the attention of art advocates who propose that certain skills, attitudes, and behaviors can be delivered through the arts. In tracing the historical shifts from the agrarian to the industrial and information ages, the Framework draws insights from science and technology education to suggest the learning that is needed for education in the twenty-first century. This document sets forth interdisciplinary themes and particular skills that are essential for life-long learning. While it does not claim that the arts exclusively own any of these skills, the hope of art educators, once again, is that the arts could become a primary vehicle in fostering:

- Learning and innovation skills, characterized by creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, and communication and collaboration
- Information, media, and technology skills, including information literacy, media literacy, and ICT (information, communication and technology) literacy
- Life and career skills, including flexibility and adaptability, initiative and self-direction, social and cross-cultural

skills, productivity and accountability, and leadership and responsibility

The emphasis given here to creativity and innovation is worth noting. This focus stands in sharp contrast to the prevailing standards-based high-stakes testing movement in the schools and their preoccupation with products and assessments. Creativity, once at the center of American arts education and research in the 1960s, is now more intentionally sought in foreign countries. If anything, the arts have always prided themselves as offering the one place in the school curriculum that engages students in creative and innovative thinking. Yet to what extent can we say that the preparation of future art educators is likewise constructed to foster the habits of mind associated with creativity in this rendition of twenty-first-century skills, including capacity for self-direction, initiative, problem solving, creative inquiry, collaboration, and leadership?

Six Reasons the Arts Matter

In 2009, Jerome Kagan, noted developmental psychologist from Harvard, delivered a finely contextualized exposition at the Dana Foundation conference on Learning, Arts, and the Brain. He identified six reasons why the arts matter and, in so doing, gave art education another reference that will likely be much quoted by advocates. Deriving not from notions about the changing world of work, but rather from the developmental and contextual needs of young learners, he stakes these claims, which he says "might be wrong," on "rational deductions from [his] knowledge of children." Highly abbreviated here, he suggests that instruction in music and art matter because they:

1. Boost self-confidence among children who are behind in mastery of reading and arithmetic
2. Help children develop a sense of personal agency
3. Develop motor skills, procedural knowledge, and—most importantly—schematic knowledge
4. Provide an opportunity to persuade children that investing effort to create an object of beauty is an ideal worthy of celebration, and that others can share in the enjoyment of a beautiful object
5. Allow a number of children to work as a cooperative unit in an effort to foster an appreciation of an appropriate balance between concern with self and concern for others
6. Provide opportunities for all children to experience and express feelings and conflicts that are not yet fully conscious and cannot be expressed coherently in words.

Kagan's contextualization of these ideas is worth reading in its entirety, but it suffices here to note that he places a high value on the construction of personal meaning through a process of working with materials and making something

beautiful, as well as on working in collaboration with others. It logically follows that art educators should have had experiences consistent with these goals in their own preparation if they are to orchestrate qualitatively similar experiences for their learners.

HOW ARE ART EDUCATORS PREPARED FOR INITIAL CERTIFICATION?

No doubt there are many other versions of promises made in the name of art education, but these examples from voices both within and outside the field suggest certain themes to the discourse: purposeful engagement with art, empowerment through inquiry, and aesthetic meaning-making. Assuming that teachers cannot really teach what they themselves have not personally experienced and processed through reflection and analysis, it would follow that content-area preparation for teaching art should encompass these themes and foster experiences consistent with them. As we will see, this may not necessarily be the case.

A Case Study of Maryland Teacher Preparation Programs

The motivation for this study comes from the desire to see all art educators teach better, no matter the place of their preparation. By no means did I undertake this study to make the argument that all art educators should be prepared in professional schools of art, even though I believe these institutions provide an excellent context in which to be educated (Carroll, Jones, and Sandell 1994). Not everyone can afford to make the high level of financial investment or wants the kind of highly focused preparation that are characteristic of an art college. Yet, important lessons and cues may be drawn from preparation programs in professional schools of art that may inform art teacher preparation in general. A recent informal survey of arts supervisors in Maryland suggests that these administrators are only moderately—and sometimes not at all—satisfied by the preparation of art teachers in the state, with the exception of those candidates from the professional school of art (Arts Education in Maryland Schools [AEMS] 2009). One supervisor put it this way:

I am concerned that students are coming out of programs with very weak art skills—many at an introductory level [of] competence. Students need to be artist-educators to fully understand the thinking process that artists use to solve problems. (SS#1-VA)¹

This study also had another origin in my conduct of a follow-up study of teachers attending our 2008 Summer Teacher Institute (Carroll 2009). Sponsorship by the Maryland State Department of Education in the initial year was intended to draw the participation of Maryland teachers; pri-

vate funding secured for the second year made possible a 50–50 balance of teachers from inside and outside the state. In an analysis of model units submitted prior to the institute, it became evident that a third of the submitted lessons or units involved little more than projects that required following directions. Roughly another third of the teachers submitted units that would allow students to insert their own meaning into their artwork, if students were so compelled; this component of meaning-making was, however, not explicitly encouraged or required. The remaining third of the units did encourage personal meaning-making, although their methods for facilitating deeper and more authentic stories and metaphors could have been further developed. Given the small size of the study and the multiple factors that might have influenced the level of meaningful engagement demonstrated in sample units, we were unable to make any claims of associations between teacher preparation and the manner in which teachers structure or orchestrate art learning.

However, we did monitor any changes that were made in teaching following the conclusion of the institute via e-portfolios and a return visit to campus in January, and in doing so, we began to hear more clearly what teachers were saying about their initial preparation for the field. Many were clearly suffering from a history of “just doing projects” that had left them without a real sense that they were artists—despite their undergraduate major in art. Teachers possessed a certain naiveté about the creative process and the ends that art could serve. More than once, we heard teachers say, “Now I understand! If what I am being asked to make does not have personal meaning for me, I won’t invest in it.” Sadly, one teacher shared that although she liked art and kids, she knew she was not an artist—and she yearned for ways to develop a more professional grounding in this role. What explains this seeming lack of preparation for teaching, given that every one of these teachers had at least an undergraduate degree in art or art education?

Content-Area Coursework Required for Certification in State-Approved Pre-K–12 Art Programs in Maryland

While the data here are gathered from the single state of Maryland, it is one where art education is in relatively good shape as a result of consistent leadership at the state and district levels, broad and persistent advocacy, maintenance of art educators at the elementary level in most districts, and a high school graduation requirement in the arts. While requirements may differ somewhat state by state, my own sampling of out-of-state programs suggests that my findings here may reflect the national norm. Furthermore, my findings are consistent with those found in Galbraith’s 1997 investigation and Zimmerman’s 1997 meta-analysis that gathered data from many states and institutions. I gathered Maryland’s program requirements in February 2009 from available online information and downloadable documents. Institutions were

then invited to verify the data, one-third of which confirmed or corrected data through e-mail and phone conversations. Of fourteen programs with state approval to prepare art teachers, ten appeared to be active at the undergraduate level and eight at the master's level, with some institutions offering both options (see tables 1 and 2).

I found that some general patterns in studio and art history requirements align closely with the type of degree awarded and the undergraduate or graduate level of degree for initial certification. Again, these findings are consistent with those reported by Galbraith (1997). The data analysis that follows first addresses undergraduate initial certification programs, followed by graduate-level preparation.

Question #1: How Broad and Deep Is Preparation in the Content Area of Art?

Of all the degrees in art education, the BS and BA degrees tend to require the fewest credits in studio art, ranging from twenty-eight to forty-five; in Maryland, four of the ten programs examined require thirty-three to thirty-six credits—the equivalent of eleven or twelve three-credit courses. Four more require forty-two to forty-eight credits—or between fourteen and sixteen three-credit courses. BFA degrees in art education require more studio credits; the one Maryland BFA in art education, located at Frostburg State University, requires forty-eight credits in studio art. Common requirements for all programs include drawing, 2-D design, and painting; most programs also require sculpture, printmaking, ceramics, photography, and 3-D design. Half the programs require a course in electronic media, two require life drawing, and one requires watercolor. Nearly all the coursework is media-based and conducted at the introductory level. Additionally, it appears that students, when they are given the opportunity to do advanced work, may move directly from a survey of introductory media-based courses to independent work (see table 1).

Art history requirements for all undergraduate art education programs, regardless of degree type, range from six to twelve credits. Eight of ten programs require Western survey, five (or half) require coursework in modern or contemporary art, and two require non-Western or global studies (see table 3).

The sum total of required credits in the content area of art can therefore range from as low as thirty-nine to as high as sixty, largely depending on requirements in the studio area. Even the Towson University program that requires a fifth year does not require more studio and art history coursework than four-year art education programs; rather, the additional coursework doubles the standard amount of art education methods classes.

For certification at the master's level, programs can lead to either an MS or MA in art education or an MAT degree. Entry into these programs requires a prior bachelor's major in art. While some programs accept a BS or

BA in art, Frostburg State University requires a BFA or, in lieu of that, a BA or BS supplemented by additional undergraduate studio coursework. The Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA), the state's premier professional school of art offering the MAT, also upholds higher standards for candidates, with requirements including a portfolio demonstrating studio breadth and depth, as well as evidence of substantial coursework in both studio and art history. Significantly, MICA is the only school in the state that requires graduate-level studio work as part of the master's degree. No institution requires additional coursework at the graduate level in art history, criticism, or aesthetics beyond what might be encountered in art education methods courses (see table 4).

The evidence here suggests that art teacher preparation in four-year degree programs leading to a BA or BS in art education primarily focuses on breadth in studio practice and is uneven in art history requirements and notably short on contemporary and global art studies. Aside from the MAT in a professional school of art, all master's programs depend on the studio and art history preparation received at the undergraduate level as the sole source of students' expertise in the content area.

Question #2: What Opportunities Do Teacher Candidates Have to Engage with Art Making that Would Be Consistent with Twenty-First-Century Skills, Knowledge, and Deep Understandings?

At a granular level, opportunities to engage with art making that are consistent with twenty-first-century skills, knowledge, and deep understandings may depend on the individual instructors whom students encounter in college art courses. College faculty often work from minimal course descriptions to shape their own instructional program and may or may not be engaged in departmental conversations about outcomes, content, or pedagogy. Nevertheless, course descriptions provide certain clues about the content that the college conceives as meeting the needs of its students. Given the predominance of media-based course menus, I opted to sample descriptions of 2-D design courses for some indication of the conceptual focus of a program. Typically, course content is stated in terms similar to the two following examples, the first from Goucher College and the second from the University of Maryland, Eastern Shore:

Goucher College: Exploration of the basic materials, concepts, languages, and techniques of the 2-Dimensional visual arts. Topics include line, shape, value, color, texture, and space. Emphasis on creative exercises in and out of class. (<http://www.goucher.edu/x1466.xml>)

University of Maryland, Eastern Shore: This is a foundation course in two-dimensional design, which places emphasis on the development of skills for the conscious application of the elements and principles of design in composition. This

TABLE 1
Studio Breadth and Depth in Art Teacher Preparation at the Baccalaureate Level in Maryland State-Approved Programs for Art, Pre-K-12

	McDaniel (BA)	Mount St. Mary's (BA)	Goucher (BA)	Notre Dame (BA)	Towson (BS; 5 year)	U of MD Eastern Shore (BA)	Morgan (BA)	U of MD College Park (BA)	Frostburg (BFA)	U of MD Baltimore County (BA)	Institutions requiring, <i>n</i> (%)
Introductory-level courses											
Drawing I/II	4	3	3	3	6	6	3	6	6	6	10 of 10 (100%)
2-D Design	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	10 of 10 (100%)
Painting I/II	4	3	4	6	3	6	3	3	3	6	10 of 10 (100%)
Sculpture I	4		4	4	3	6	3	3	3	3 (or ceramics)	8 of 10 (80%)
Printmaking I	4		4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	8 of 10 (80%)
Ceramics I	4		4	3	3	6	3	3	3	3	7 of 10 (70%)
Photo I	4		4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	6 of 10 (60%)
3-D Design				3	3	3	3	3	3	3	6 of 10 (60%)
Electronic Media				3	3	3	3	3	3	3	5 of 10 (50%)
Life Drawing			3	3	3		3	3	3		2 of 10 (20%)
Art Theory				3			3	3			2 of 10 (20%)
Watercolor				3							1 of 10 (10%)
Choice	4	18						3			
Intermediate or advanced level		3	6-9	6	6		15	12	18	6-9	
Total credits	28	30	33-36	36	36	36	42	48	48	45-48	

Note. Studio requirements are listed in descending order with number of credits by institution. Maryland offers state-approved undergraduate programs at fourteen institutions. St. Mary's College of Maryland and the Maryland Institute College of Art no longer offer certification at the undergraduate level. Washington College does not appear to be active but no information was available on the Web or by phone contact. Differences were found in UMBC's courses required of art majors and those required by the education department. Data were gathered from college and university Web sites and documents downloaded on March 4, 2009.

TABLE 2
Studio Breadth and Depth in Initial Certification Graduate-Level Programs

Institution	Graduate Degree	Studio Requirements for Admission	Graduate-level studio courses	Credits for the degree/art education methods courses
College of Notre Dame	MAT in Art Education	Undergraduate major in art	None	39 credits with 3 in art education methods
Frostburg State University	MAT	BFA in art is preferred; if BA or BS, additional coursework may be required prior to entry	None	42–45 credits with 3–4 credits in art education methods
McDaniel College	MS	Undergrad degree in art	None	33 credits with 3 credits in art education methods
Mount St. Mary's University	MAT	Undergrad degree in art; may need additional credits to meet MSDE standards	None	40 credits with 3 credits in art education methods
St. Mary's College of Maryland	MAT	"Solid grounding in a vigorously defined major" having breadth and depth; own undergrad program requires total of 38 credits of which 24 are required for art history majors and 33 for studio majors	None	43 credits with 6 credits in art education methods
University of Maryland, College Park	M.Ed	Undergraduate major in art, 3.0 min.; 36 credits in art, 12 credits in art history, portfolio	None	30 credits with 9 credits in art education methods
University of MD Eastern Shore	IMCP/M.Ed. w/Cert. MAT	Same as above	None	42–45 credits with 9 credits in art education methods
Maryland Institute College of Art	BFA/MAT (5 year) MAT (2 year)	Undergraduate degree in art; if completed more than 5 years ago, may need additional coursework For MICA graduates only: 18 art education credits, 15 art history credits, 90 studio credits, portfolio showing breadth and depth, 3.0 or better BFA preferred; BA or BS with 40 or more studio credits, 12 art history credits, portfolio with depth and breadth; additional studio courses can be required	6 credits thesis	39 credits with 3 credits in art education methods 35 credits with 15 credits in art education methods 60 credits, with 15 credits in art education methods

TABLE 3
Art History in Art Teacher Preparation at the Baccalaureate Level in Maryland State-Approved Programs for Art, K-12

Course	Mount St. Mary's (BA)	Goucher (BA)	Notre Dame (BA)	Morgan (BA)	McDaniel (BA)	Towson (BS, 5 year)	U of MD, Baltimore County (BA)	Frostburg (BFA)	U of MD, College Park (BA)	U of MD, Eastern Shore (BA)	Institutions requiring, <i>n</i> (%)
Western Survey I/II	6		6	6	8	6		3	6	66	8 of 10 (80%)
Modern or 20th Century Art	3	3	3	3	4			3			5 of 10 (50%)
Criticism/Theory								3	3	3	3 of 10 (30%)
Non-Western		6				6	12	3	6	3	2 of 10 (20%)
Electives											
Total credits	9	9	9	9	12	12	12	12	15	15	

Note. Maryland offers state-approved undergraduate programs at fourteen institutions. St. Mary's College of Maryland and the Maryland Institute College of Art no longer offer certification at the undergraduate level. Washington College does not appear to be active. Loyola appears to be active, but no information was available on the Web or by phone contact. Data were gathered from college and university Web sites and documents downloaded March 4, 2009.

TABLE 4a
 Art Education Methods in Art Teacher Preparation: Credits at Baccalaureate Level in Maryland State Approved Programs for Art, Pre-K-12

Course	Goucher (BA)		Mount St. Mary's (BA)		Notre Dame (BA)		U of MD, Eastern Shore (BA)		Morgan (BA)		U of MD, Baltimore County (BA)		Frostburg (BFA)		McDaniel (BA)		Towson (BS, 5 year)		U of MD, College Park (BA)	
	0	3	3	3	3 (elementary)	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Art Education Methods (credits)	0	3	3	3	3 (elementary)	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Total	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

Note. Credits are shown for Methods courses only and do not include practicum, field experience, or student teaching. Approved programs that appear to be inactive are not listed. These include Washington College, Loyola, and UMBC. For Morgan, I was not able to identify in materials available online how a major in fine arts of 51 credits with a foreign language requirement of 6 credits and general education courses interfaces with secondary certification requirements of 42 credits. May meet or exceed normal requirements for a BA. All data gathered from college and university Web sites and downloadable catalogues March 4, 2009.

TABLE 4b
 Art Education Methods in Art Teacher Preparation: Credits at Masters' Level in Maryland State-Approved Programs for Art, Pre-K-12

Course	MAT Notre Dame (MAT)	McDaniel (MS)	Mount St. Mary's (MAT)	U of MD, Eastern Shore (MAT)	Frostburg (MAT)	St. Mary's College of MD (MAT)	U of MD, College Park (M.Ed)	U of MD, College Park (IMCP)	MICA (MAT)
Art Education Methods (credits)	3	3	3	3	3-4	6	9	9	15

IMCP = Integrated Masters, M.Ed with art.

course allows students immediate involvement in the essential problems in the translation of ideas into 2-dimensional visual expressions. Students will explore a variety of materials and techniques in many media. (<http://www.UM.Easter-Shore.pdf>)

Such modernist course descriptions appear to be based on a Bauhaus-style curriculum or, more accurately, a curriculum generated in 1899 by Arthur Wesley Dow. They do not necessarily reflect contemporary art and design practices that emphasize visual thinking, problem solving, or inquiry, nor do they seem expansive enough to explore the vocabulary that is descriptive of contemporary art (Gude 2004). Furthermore, these descriptions appear to perpetuate the early-twentieth-century notion that the elements of art and principles of design are the rightful core of a school art curriculum, when meaningful engagement with more dynamic and relevant concepts, themes, ideas, and questions might provide art educators with deeper grounding. Although one could further analyze course syllabi, assignments, and students' assessments of instructors' conceptual orientation, it is important to recognize that some colleges are beginning to rethink both the foundation sequence in design and the traditional foundation structure that is based on a traditional set of media investigations. One such example is the art foundations program of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, which offers a four-course sequence in visual concepts that explores two-dimensions, camera vision, three-dimensional form, space, and interaction, and time-based media.

Question #3: What Level of Sophistication Do Candidates for Pre-K–12 Art Have in Art Education Theory and Practice?

For the purposes of this study, art education methods are defined as content-specific and do not include student teaching, internships, or other education requirements. The focus is pedagogical, developmental, and contextual to teaching art in K–12 settings. Data suggest that undergraduate programs vary in their methods requirements, which range from zero to fifteen credits and are typically offered as a single three-credit course covering grades pre-K to 12 or are separated into two pieces, one concerning elementary and the other secondary methods. As an exception, one state university, the University of Maryland, offers an art methods course specific to criticism and aesthetics as part of its five-methods course sequence.

For some reason, graduate-level initial certification programs typically require even fewer credits in methods than undergraduate programs. In these graduate programs, requirements range from three to four credits, with two notable exceptions—the University of Maryland, which requires a set of summer courses in art education to be taken prior to a year-long internship; and MICA, which complements fifteen

credits of art methods with another nine credits in educational psychology, foundations, and special education—all tailored specifically to reflect art education philosophy, theory, and practice, and essentially doubling the amount of art education courses to twenty-four credits (see table 2).

Even if the typical three to six credits in art education methods are cutting edge, it is not likely that the philosophy, theory, and practice presented in one or two courses could override the instructional models experienced in studio and art history classes. One must assume that teachers will emulate models for practice that they have experienced in their own art education, for better or worse. It is hard to conceive what lessons about art education pedagogy, children and adolescents' artistic growth, strategies for teaching, curriculum design, history of the field, and contemporary developments could be delivered within the limitations of a single three-credit course, or even within two courses.

Summary: Course Requirements for Initial Certification

This survey of Maryland's approved programs suggests that content-area expertise in this state might best be described as having breadth but not depth. The programs here display four serious shortcomings: First, the breadth of studio course requirements does not typically accommodate a concentration in which more depth might be achieved; when students are afforded the opportunity to create an independent body of work, they are catapulted to that stage without receiving sufficient intermediate-level grounding. Second, the perpetuation of modernist theory, as implied by many design course descriptions, does not reflect contemporary theory or practice in art. Third, requirements for global art history and contemporary art studies are largely missing from curricula. Fourth, art education methods coursework is entirely missing in at least one program, and in many programs, the methods courses are too few to make a difference in shaping the way that students will eventually teach and are typically not substantial enough to ensure that teachers are well grounded in art education practice, theory, and philosophy. Related factors, which this study does not examine, are the K–12 classroom experience that studio faculty teaching art education may or may not have, and the advanced studies that K–12 educators instructing at the college level may or may not have. In either case, it is possible that students could be seriously shortchanged in their preparation.

What accounts for this state of affairs? One factor that complicates teacher preparation in art, at least in Maryland, is that teachers must be prepared to teach students from early childhood through adolescence. Simultaneously, there is a real need for both breadth and depth in instruction. I invited two Maryland supervisors of large districts to share their thoughts on why both breadth and depth were important in

teaching art education. In an e-mail on June 10, 2009, Mark Coates, from Howard County, offered his thoughts:

Breadth is really important for us, as we want students to be able to teach drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, crafts, mixed media—and at the high school level photography and digital media. . . . By not having depth in their work, a candidate cannot have the understanding that comes with being invested in art making. Teachers need to understand the art making process personally in order to teach those behaviors to their students. Helping kids to work through ideas and materials requires a deep understanding that goes beyond technical understanding.

Further elaborating on Coates' response, Linda Popp, Baltimore County, wrote on July 17, 2009:

Our strongest art teachers are artists. They are experiencing the same artistic process that they are presenting to the students. It's not something they've read about, or were taught, but the way they are living. It's that deep exploration of an idea that then may lead to a new idea. It's what we are asking the students to do. We need to be doing it ourselves. I think it is especially important at the high school level. Teachers who have a "concentration" in their own work are better able to help students find their own voice in their work. They understand how you can take an assignment/student problem and make it your own. It is the lens that you use to look at any problem.

Given the desire these administrators articulate for both breadth and depth—or what is also called "content area expertise"—I began to wonder if the standards by which we judge both programs and individual candidates are part of the problem. Is this a case of national or state standards set too low? Do standardized tests help in assessing content area expertise? In the following section, I will look at both.

MINDING THE GAP

Is It a Question of Standards for Teaching Art?

Certain agencies, such as state departments, regional accreditation bodies, and national testing vendors have the responsibility to ensure that state-approved programs meet set standards. The NAEA maintains a set of standards that are consistent with the standards used for accreditation and reaccreditation by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) and the National Council for the Advancement of Teacher Education (NCATE). State departments of education may also use additional standards if they so choose, such as that set by the Interstate New Teacher Assessment Standards Consortium (INTASC) and the Essential Dimensions of Teaching (EDoT). It is somewhat striking that all these different sets of standards list content-area expertise as

their first priority, with a special emphasis on both depth and breadth in the specific content areas. The following examples illustrate this point.

NAEA Standards

NAEA standards (2009b) for art teacher preparation programs with a focus on the content of the visual arts, which are inclusive of the NASAD and NACTE standards, note that teacher education programs in the visual arts should:

- Enable candidates to study and engage in the processes of art making involving traditional and contemporary studio approaches
- Enable candidates to concentrate in one or more studio areas
- Engage candidates in inquiry in the history of art, enable them to acquire knowledge of the context in which works of art have been created, and foster respect for all forms of art
- Include study of a diverse set of traditional and contemporary artists.

State Standards for Undergraduate Teacher Preparation

The Maryland Higher Education Commission calls for academic rigor that gives teachers "the depth and breadth necessary to effectively teach their subjects" (1995, 1). The same document also calls for "campus-wide attention to the importance of ensuring the highest quality instruction—across the disciplines in the arts and sciences—that will serve prospective teachers. In particular, efforts should be made to improve instruction at the *introductory level*" (2).

The 1994 Essential Dimensions of Teaching (EDoT)

The Essential Dimensions of Teaching include the following standards:

Teacher candidates and teachers will:

1. Demonstrate mastery of appropriate academic disciplines and a repertoire of teaching techniques

Knowledge

- a. Describe theoretical framework and the concepts, principles, facts, and modes of thinking of the subject area to be taught.
- b. Discuss historical and current trends and issues within the subject area(s).
- c. Describe major pedagogical theories, concepts, principles & strategies appropriate for the subject area(s).

Analysis

- a. Interpret the contributions of major thinkers in the subject area.
- b. Compare and contrast significant forms, elements, and processes of the subject area.

Action

- a. Model the attitudes, dispositions, and behaviors related to the subject area(s), e.g. the teacher as scientist, writer, *artist*, etc.

Reflection

- a. Critique one's own and other's subject area expertise, e.g., depth, breadth, and currency.

Given such standards, how are programs with such obvious shortcomings in depth and scope being approved? Is it possible that the processes constructed by accreditation or approval agencies do not accommodate a close enough look at expert evidence in the visual arts? NCATE, for example, does not specifically assess visual arts instruction. Has the shift from program reviews based on course credits to assessment based on outcomes made it harder for state evaluators to see the forest for the trees? Or is the existence of such shortcomings a case of not knowing what qualifies as depth and scope when evaluating art teacher candidate portfolios? Whatever the reasons, it would appear to be possible to earn the NCATE approval required by the state of Maryland without necessarily demonstrating depth and scope in content-area expertise and without offering a single course in art education methods.

While NASAD does have standards for art teacher preparation at the undergraduate and graduate levels, the only institution that NASAD has accredited in Maryland is MICA, the professional school of art.

Is the Gap a Question of Standardized Assessments?

Like many states, Maryland relies on the Praxis exams designed and administered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) to ensure that teachers meet a minimum standard, even though there is no evidence of a correlation between scores and classroom performance. The Praxis exams are specifically intended to help assess content-area expertise. Three exams in the visual arts content area currently exist, even though one could dispute the soundness of the assessments, particularly for the so-called studio exam. The plan to rewrite these exams as one exam is good news. However, as either paper-and-pencil tests or computer exams, this method of assessment is destined to fail the arts—especially if we are

interested in assessing teachers for open-ended problem solving, creative thinking, and meaning-making abilities. At best, the current exams are of limited value in assessing the depth and scope of a candidate's expertise. The irony is that ETS also administers the AP exam in studio art, a test that, with its open-ended portfolio assessment, stands as a national model for reader reliability. Apparently only high school students, not future teachers, are afforded authentic assessment of their content-area expertise.

CLOSING THE GAP BETWEEN PROMISES, STANDARDS, AND INITIAL PREPARATION

This inquiry began out of the sense that our public promises about the value of art might exceed the capacity of individual art educators to deliver on them. Teacher preparation in art faces several challenges, specifically its status as a pre-K–12 area of specialization and the necessity for its teachers to achieve both breadth and depth in content-area expertise. Furthermore, there are challenges in providing teachers with an education in art that models purposeful engagement with art, empowerment through inquiry, and aesthetic meaning-making.

In truth, the field is only as good as each of its teachers out on the front lines, with real kids in real schools. It appears that the gap between our promises and our practice is not due to a lack of standards, although one wonders if the process of evaluating programs via outcomes has distracted attention from the scope and sequence of required coursework in art and art history. Certainly, the standardized tests required for teaching have been of little help in assessing deep content-area expertise. So what can be done?

Any changes in formal assessments by state departments, educational testing services, or accrediting agencies will take a great deal of time, effort, and resources to implement. In the meantime, it may be more expeditious for individual institutions to responsibly examine their own teacher preparation programs for their capacity to develop content-area expertise in art. Course offerings, especially at the foundation level, the value of current course content, how such courses are conceptualized in light of twenty-first-century thinking, and the degree to which depth is or could be achieved within individual programs are all matters worth examination. These are not only practical issues, but moral and ethical issues as well. How fair is it to underprepare teacher candidates for the profession? How ethical is it to prepare candidates who will not be competitive in the marketplace or successful in the classroom, or who will feel insecure when they realize the understandings and abilities that they lack? Given that underprepared teacher candidates do sometimes secure teaching positions, how moral is it that their young students should receive a substandard art education? Returning to the larger question posed by this article, is it moral for the field

of art education to perpetually inflate promises that cannot be delivered by the majority of K–12 art educators?

TEN QUESTIONS FOR DELIBERATION

1. Should the BFA in Art Be the Norm Rather than the Exception in Undergraduate Preparation for Art Educators?

One conclusion that might be drawn from this study is that the amount of coursework required for a BA or BS in art education offers breadth but not depth. Even thirty-six studio credits, typically the high end for a BS or BA, amounts to only twelve three-credit courses—little more than the standard array of introductory-level media-based courses and one or two courses in design. Given that a BFA accommodates more studio work, the odds increase that a student will develop an area of concentration and gain more in-depth knowledge and expertise, while still preserving some breadth.

2. Should Student Teaching at the Undergraduate Level Move into a Fifth Year?

Another option in undergraduate initial certification programs is to move the student teaching portion of certification into a fifth year, following completion of baccalaureate requirements. Such a shift accommodates a quality check. Students whose work in studio, art history, and art education courses does not merit continuation into the fifth year can complete their four-year degree without penalty, while students whose work does qualify can continue with the program. This gatekeeping function ensures that candidates have sufficient breadth and depth for initial certification in the field. However, fifth year programs should also consider including continuing development in the content area, as well as additional studies in art education.

3. Should Low-Producing Initial Certification Programs Close Out?

Unfortunately, low-producing programs that graduate one, two, or even a few students a year do not constitute a critical mass that economically merits substantial investment. Nor do they create a dynamic learning community of art education peers. Such programs may manage to offer art education by employing a single part-time art instructor to teach a single methods course, or may assign responsibility to a studio faculty member for whom art education is not a central focus. Might it be more responsible for such institutions to focus on what they do well—that is, prepare art majors, BFAs if possible, for entry into graduate-level certification programs in which they can find a larger, sufficiently supported community dedicated to art education? Another option might be for state departments of education to set expiration dates on state approval for programs that are inactive or low-producing.

4. Should Liberal Arts Colleges Refocus on Liberal Arts instead of Art Education?

A liberal arts degree reflects a broad education that can be an important asset to artists and art educators. Yet, the capacity to offer sufficient breadth and depth in both studio and art history, as well as sufficient art education methods coursework, is decidedly limited in the context of a liberal arts education and may even be beyond its central mission. Would it be better for liberal arts colleges to concentrate on doing well what they do best and prepare students to command a breadth of understanding that is vital to making conceptually rich interdisciplinary connections with art? Under such a system, students undertaking initial preparation in teaching would be directed to graduate-level art teacher preparation programs that would add depth to their studies in studio art, art history, and contemporary art.

5. Should More Content-Area Coursework Be Added to Master's-Level Studies in Initial Certification Programs?

Preparation for initial licensure at the graduate level raises its own set of questions. With the exception of programs offered by professional schools of art, typical programs leading to MAT, MA, and MS degrees do nothing to increase content-area expertise. Rather, they rely on knowledge gained by students at the undergraduate level. Graduate-level preparation could provide an opportunity to offer more coursework in studio art and art history, perhaps with an emphasis on contemporary theory and practice.

6. Should Art Educators Join in the Conversation about How to Best Prepare Artists, Designers, and Art Educators for the Twenty-First Century?

The time has come to ask what art teachers—as well as artists and designers—in the twenty-first century should have in terms of dispositions, capabilities, skills, and knowledge. Some people in higher education are already actively engaged with these questions, and, as noted previously, there is hopeful evidence that curricular evolution is taking place in some studio programs. Claims about what students will need to do well in the future and to whom the future will belong should raise important discussions in academia about what is being taught and how. The “how” of teaching is critical. There is evidence of increasing interest in art teaching at the college level from both deans of schools of the fine arts and current MFA candidates. New thinking about pedagogy and content at the post-secondary level can be found in a crop of recent books and articles suggesting a surge of interest in post-secondary art education on which the field might capitalize (Elkins 2001; Lupton 2005; Madoff 2009; Singerman 1999; Tavin, Kushins, and Elniski 2007). Clearly, when looking for models to emulate, art teachers will turn to those that they encountered as students in their own studio and art

history classes. Perhaps it is time to join the conversation about college preparation in art and its relevancy to today's artists, art educators, and the younger generation, who will be the recipients of such an art education.

A less obvious factor worth noting here is that all too often, studio faculty have been dismissive of those who declare art education as a major or minor. The message that students do not have to be "that good at art to teach" or the diminished investment of energy in training a future teacher have had a negative impact on the ways that art educators see themselves and understand the purpose of making or engaging with art. The opposite should be the case: future teachers should be held to a higher standard by studio faculty and given more support, because they will be responsible for teaching others' children.

7. Should Art Educators Initiate a Dialogue with Accrediting Agencies Regarding What Constitutes Content Expertise in Art?

Because program approval rests on meeting certain standards and content-area expertise is high on the list of all involved, art educators may need to have a conversation with accrediting agencies about what constitutes depth and breadth in studio art, art history, contemporary art, and art education. NASAD and NCATE work together but play different roles in terms of approaches to content. NCATE has an official statement respecting the accreditation decisions of NASAD in the field of art education. NASAD has detailed standards for teacher preparation that emphasize art content. NCATE standards emphasize content associated with teaching. NCATE accreditation is voluntary in some states and required in others. NASAD accreditation is voluntary in all states and could serve as a voice for art content in more institutions if those institutions chose to participate or otherwise followed NASAD curricular standards and guidelines. It would appear that many institutions in Maryland are successfully earning NCATE approval for art education programs that do not measure up to the needs of the profession. The same could be the case for institutions in other states that rely on NCATE for national accreditation. Accreditation agencies and evaluations teams may need more information from the field of art education. More proactively, art educators may want to work directly with NASAD and NCATE to ensure the best possible conditions for reviews of art education programs.

8. Should More Resources Be Invested in Professional Development Programs?

The need for professional development is most likely the most critical finding of this study. Most states have requirements for renewing teaching certificates that are based on additional hours or a personal professional development plan, and some states require a master's degree or equivalency within a set number of years following initial licensure. Many factors make continuing professional development im-

portant: the need for a sense of community and renewal, the quest to know more about both art and teaching, and fresh stimulus for one's own professional development as an artist and teacher. In the absence of high-quality, discipline-specific professional development, other outcomes become more likely: loss of self-efficacy, pull of school culture, disengagement from the field, and diminished joy in teaching.

Some teachers seek workshops, on-line courses, and masters' degrees on their own to continue their artistic and intellectual growth and transformation (Sabol 2006). Yet, even teachers with advanced degrees need periodic opportunities for renewal. Research on professional development suggests that transformation and renewal require an extended period of engagement in a community, with opportunities to test ideas in practice and then return for dialogue (Garet et al. 2001). In the present economic climate, it is hard to imagine that many school districts have the resources to conduct intensive, transformational programs, and states will likely have a harder time finding the resources to fund them as well. Currently, the NAEA has offered to help advertise academies that have been selected according to professional development criteria. Although the NAEA attempts to select high-quality academies for their endorsement, could the organization do more to financially support these professional development efforts?

9. What Research Does the Field Need on Quality Art Teacher Preparation?

What do we know about what is required to prepare art teachers of quality who will stay in the profession, and the nature of high quality programs? We need research on quality preparation of art teachers, the professional development of art teachers, and art teacher retention to help the field define what constitutes quality preparation. Research that makes a connection between preparation programs and student learning is also necessary; currently, conversations are occurring at the national level about making a direct connection between K-12 student achievement and the institutions where teachers obtained their preparation (Duncan 2009; Cibulka 2009).

10. Should Art Educators Join the Larger Education Community in Making the Case for More Teacher Preparation, Not Less—Both in Terms of Content-Area Expertise and Pedagogical Preparation?

Secretary of Education Arne Duncan (2009) has predicted a massive teacher shortage in the coming decade. In the rush to supply more teachers, many proposals have already been made for alternative preparation programs and fast-tracks to teaching. Although Duncan has expressed concern with the numbers of new teachers that will be required, he has also been clear about the need for quality educators who are prepared for the challenges they will face. He notes that "the

bar has been raised for successful teacher preparation programs, because we ask much more of our teachers today than even a decade ago” (2009). Because we have participated in raising that bar through the promises that we have made, the credibility of art educators is at stake.

ART EDUCATION'S CREDIBLE FUTURE AT STAKE

Art educators are at a crossroad. Either the claims being made in the name of art education need to be reconsidered, or the field must step up to the plate and recognize that the current state of teacher preparation and professional development needs serious attention, work, and investment to allow art teachers to deliver on these promises. In some cases, this heightened level of accountability may mean closing programs that are not ethically and morally responsible to future art educators and subsequent generations of students. The field stands to lose ground in the context of interdisciplinary arts education if the discipline of art offers no substance; “edutainment,” in which drive-by arts encounters have limited impact outside a comprehensive arts curriculum; or art classes in which little is done to engage learners in purposeful engagement with art, empowerment through inquiry, and aesthetic meaning-making. Yet the times are ripe for change. The conversation has already begun. If art educators step into the dialogue with our colleagues, perhaps we can find partners who are willing to help us realize our potential and deliver on our promises.

NOTE

1. SS#1-VA is a code for noting school district and that the supervisor is in charge of the visual arts. This particular quote comes from an unpublished document distributed at AEMS' Dean's Roundtable, March 10, 2009.

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