

ART AND DESIGN ON CAMPUS
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Since the Board of Trustees visited the School of Art and Design it is appropriate to fill Board members in on its history over the last 124 years. The teaching of Art goes back to the opening of Northern and was created in a rudimentary form on July 14, 1899. At the time it was merely called “Geography and Drawing” as teachers had to draw maps and the first teacher was Martha Ackermann (1901-1903). At this time there was even a course: “Black Board Drawing” to be used by all teachers. We’ve come long way!

During the early days of the Department, Peter White provided special funding for the purchase of art replicas – paintings, lithographs, sculptures – which were found throughout Longyear Hall. The idea was to create a museum effect on campus.

Grace Spalding (1903-1938) was the most famous art teacher of this era. A graduate of Pratt Institute, she frequently traveled to Europe to further her artistic experience. She was known for her painting focusing on Middle Island and red huckleberries. In 1938 Nadia Leonardelli took over and remained “the department” until 1946 when Cleobelle Harrison succeeded her.

In 1965, Richard “Mike” Gorski was hired as the new department head. It was his task to restructure the Art Department and bring in curriculum change. There was a shift away from the earlier emphasis on art as a teaching tool to art as a creative and unique experience. The younger faculty that Gorski hired were experimental artists, interested in exploring new media of artistic expression with their students.

As evidence of this change in focus on June 11, 1966 the name was changed from the Department of Art to the Department of Visual Art. In 1973 the official name became the Department of Art & Design. In August 1972 the Board of Control approved the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. The result of Gorski's work was the creation of the multi-faceted department.

Over the years, the department has had scattered quarters around the campus from facilities in Kaye Hall to Russell Thomas Fine Arts Building. In 1970 offices were moved into the Harden Center. Then there was the big move to Lee Hall where the old kitchen was their work area, while other students worked at the Birdseye Building in north campus. Many of the work facilities were make-shift with faculty building kilns with their own funds. This remained the center of Art & Design until August 1996, when ultra-modern facilities were opened in the old Service Building and Power Plant as a result of President Bill Vandament's careful financing. At last A&D had a permanent home.

In 2006/2007 under Michael Cinelli, the Board of Trustees approved of renaming the department, the School of Art and Design. This was done to put the department into a more competitive grouping and provide it with added status. At the time the department had close to 800 majors.

The department, through the DeVos Art Museum and the Visiting Artist Program also performs the regional objective of providing students, faculty and the community with exposure to exhibitions exemplifying the cultural breadth of the visual arts from international, regional and local sources, including the University's permanent art collection.

The department one of the more popular and vibrant on campus has gone from Geography and Drawing with a faculty of one over a dozen to maintain to its wide-ranging

Addendum #2

program: Art Education, Art History, Ceramics, Computer Art, Digital Cinema, Drawing and Painting, Graphic Design, Human-Centered Design, Illustration, Metal Smithing and Sculpture, Photography, Wood Working and Furniture Making and Social Media design. As I speak, Artificial Intelligence or AI is being developed in the department, which is continuously preparing students “in the development of unique visual voices within large visual culture.” There are other programs that prepare art students as entrepreneurs as they seek to develop art studios and art shops. This is one of a number of departments on campus that has radically expanded and changed over the century and a quarter. It, along with museum, dance and theater, successfully promotes and highlights the work of the university.