# **Evaluating art studio courses at Sultan Qaboos University in light** of the discipline based art education theory

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## **Abstract**

Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE), a theory developed in the USA, has been influential but also used in Art Education institutions world-wide. One of its stated goals was to develop the quality of teaching art education. Today, it is used as a theory for identifying and assessing good practices in the field of Art Education. The purpose of this research is to evaluate the Art Studio courses at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) in light of the DBAE theory. The main research question was formulated as: To what extent do the Art Studio courses at SQU provide experiences in the disciplines of Art History, Art Criticism, Aesthetics, and Art Production? The structured-observation schedule and students' evaluation sheet were used in this research. The results show that the lecturers at SOU do not focus highly on the Art Content, which is derived from the four disciplines. On the contrary, the main focus was on the discipline of Art Production, suggesting an Art-Studio orientation. However, the standard in this discipline, Art Production, was not rated very highly by the students or the researcher. The results also suggest that the Art Education Department at SQU should adopt a clear philosophy of teaching and learning in and through Art and that the Art content for the Art-based courses should be derived from the four disciplines as well as from related-fields such as Multiculturalism, New Technology and Educational Museum. These disciplines should be integrated across the program as far as possible while Art studio should remain at the heart of the undergraduate program. This theory should be generalised to all Art-courses to ensure at least the minimum, necessary experience in each of the four disciplines for each Art-based course at SQU.

Keywords: Art Studio Courses, Program Evaluation, Art Education, DBAE, Good Art-practices, Art teacher, Preparation Program.

#### Introduction

Excellence in education, excellence in arts disciplines, and excellence in related fields must go hand in hand in the way of preparing teacher of art education. The task of improving Art teacher preparation programmes is of central importance in the field of Art Education today. Goodwin (2003:2) points out that "Central to this notion [new teacher certification plan] is that pre-professional training programs must provide teacher candidates with the basic tools to inform policy decisions, and associations should provide appropriate opportunities for training and resources to enable teachers to inform policy decisions to improve students' learning".

Furthermore, the Art teacher preparation programmes need to be improved even where they can be described as already strong, as they need to take account of developments in Art Education as a professional field. However, as Day (1997:3) points out "Many other programs, however, do not provide sound preparation for college students who wish to teach art". He emphasises that these programmes will have to get significantly better if they are to meet the requirements for Art Education in this millennium. Day suggests that it is possible to meet this challenge, as "The field of art education carries the knowledge needed to help improve teacher preparation programs. There is a fund of theory, foundational principles, and criteria that might be applied in order to foster reform" (p.4). He refers to current theory in Art Education, particularly in the USA which is known as Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE) or as he calls it the content-centred approach, as an alternative approach to meet the necessary educational reforms.

In addition, Day, in his study (2000) entitled 'Preparing Teacher for Excellence', suggests that major changes are necessary in Art teacher preparation programmes. This change for university undergraduates includes the expectation that they will study Art-related disciplines, as well as becoming proficient in the domain of Art Education. Moreover, Eisner's book (2002) entitled 'The Arts and the Creation of Mind' illuminates the various ways that making and appreciating Art are cognitive endeavours. He indicates that "there is no single sacrosanct vision of the aims of arts education. Examples of this diversity abound in the broad field of arts education today and in the past" (p.25). However, Eisner describes some of the approaches that direct the aims and content of Art Education today. He describes them separately to make each approach vivid; in practice however, he emphasises that they are likely to be integrated as one unit in any programme. The DBAE was one of these possible approaches. As Eisner (2002:41) says "Today these and other functions of arts education are put forward as reasons to include arts in school programs". These aims go further than simply focusing upon teaching students specific skills, practices, and bodies of knowledge.

Art Education institutions world-wide, engaged in the preparation of Art teachers, have to address a broad range of issues regarding strengthening teaching and improving learning in and through Art. A high quality Art teacher preparation programme today should produce teachers who "... know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students" (NBPTS, 2001, p. vi) and additionally how they integrate and link their subject with other related fields. This means that the good Art teachers should understand the subjects they teach, as well as related subjects in considerable depth. The recent literature on Art Education suggest more attention should be placed on the roles of Art History, Art Criticism, Aesthetics and Visual Cultures in Art and Design, as well as the need to address other trends and issues, such as new technology in making and teaching Art.

## **Statement of the Study**

In order to develop Art in general and Art Education specifically, the Art Education department of the Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) in Oman was established in 1991. Its main purpose is to prepare Art teachers for work in secondary schools and consequently the numbers of Omani Art teachers has increased, gradually replacing foreign nationals under the government's plan called "Omanization". However, this increase reflects the improvement of the quantity of Art teachers in Oman, rather than reflecting quality of teaching Art and Art Education. From the researcher's observations, as supervisor for Art teacher training courses at SQU, most teachers who graduate from this programme do not know how to perceive and respond to works of Art well enough to understand either sensory qualities or their structures. Even those who have had the Art instruction are not much better in their ability to respond to works of Art in ways that deepen understanding and appreciation.

The researcher adopted the Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE) as a theory for evaluating art content in the art studio courses at SQU. One might asked why the researcher chose the DBAE theory rather than others. The following points describe the reasons behind this chosen:

- This approach will fill the gap in Omani Art Education programmer in term of aesthetic education and Art criticism and student will be more active in language of Art.
- The content in this approach derived from abroad rang of resources which include western and non-western cultures. Therefore this study will examine this approach in term of Eastern Arabian contexts as well as Western art.
- It is an approach, which has got more structure and balance in teaching and learning art. This is one of the important aims in term of curriculum planning and development.
- In this approach, students become more familiar with a wide range of different art areas, art materials, tools and contemporary art.
- This approach will help the art faculties to understand and develop their understanding about the real role of contemporary art education.
- Last but not least, it is an approach, which has been examined and re-examine in terms of theory and practice in teaching and learning visual art. Moreover, the current research will give an opportunity to exam DBAE in terms of higher education contexts

The purpose of this research is evaluate the Art Studio courses at SQU in light of the DBAE theory, therefore, following question was formulated: To what extent do the Art Studio courses at SQU provide experiences in the disciplines of Art History, Art Criticism, Aesthetics, and Art Production?

# Research Design and Methodology

In order to achieve a greater understanding of teaching art studio courses at SQU, the researcher chose the structured-observation schedule which was based on a diagram consisting of vertical and horizontal sections. In the horizontal section, the researcher included a rating according to a six point scale of observed behaviour (1 = not at all, 2 = very

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "Omanization" means replacing foreign workers with Omanis at all levels and fields as rapidly as possible. The reason behind this is that the Omani government has plans to integrate more and more Omani into positions that up to now have been held by foreign nationals.

little, 3 = a little, 4 = medium 5 = a lot and 6 = a very great deal). In the vertical section, the lecturers-students' activities are divided into four main categories: Art History, Art Criticism, Aesthetics and Art Production (Art Content). In addition, the researcher used also the students' evaluation, which is same schedule of the structured observation used by the researcher, for evaluating the Art-Studio courses at SQU to increase the validity and reliability of the current study. To judge the internal (face) validity of the first draft of the initial structured-observation, the researcher sent it to experts to examine the research's instruments. Since the subjects of this study speak Arabic, the instruments had to be proved, translated and reviewed in both languages: Arabic and English languages. After all the suggestions were taken, the research instruments were corrected accordingly for the pilot study.

To carry out the fieldwork (pilot fieldwork and main fieldwork), the permit had to be obtained. The researcher and the co-researcher (lecture worked at the Art Education department at SQU) observed six Art studio courses (N=6) were selected randomly as samples for the pilot structured-observation schedule. To measure interrater reliability, the Spearman rank correlation coefficient (formerly rho [p]) was used. The reliability of mean k judges' ratings = 0.64 and alpha = 0.17. This result shows that the correlation for the total score for the both first and second observer is satisfactory but the correlation is not statistically significant at the 01 level (2-tailed). However, it was found that the correlation was significant with some sub-headings of the observation schedule. It was also found that the total correlation coefficient between the two observers is significant in the areas of Art Criticism and the Aesthetics at the .005 level. According to the results of the pilot study, some changes were made such adding a new rating, producing a 6 point scale in stead of a 5 point scale. The reason behind this shift was that there was a big gap between a little= 3 and a lot=4, than the final structured-observation schedule was ready for the final fieldwork-observations.

## Population and Samples of the Study

For the researcher observation, four Art studio courses (N=4) were selected according to the teaching schedule of the faculty in the department and to the time convenience for the researcher. At the same time, these courses were representative of the compulsory-specialisation courses as well as the Art elective-specialisation. The observations were carried out for four teaching weeks for each course with one visit each week (between 3-4 hours for each visit). When the researcher had done all his observations, which were nearly the end of the semester, he distributed the students' evaluation sheet to all the students in each Art Studio course individually. He discussed the meaning of each item to make sure that students understood and could interpret the content of the evaluation sheet in the same way to ensure interpretive validity for this instrument. The final number of Art Studio courses evaluated by the current students was (N=8) (see Table 1).

**COURSES OBSERVATION COURSES** TOTAL OF **EVALUATED BY THE** TIME BY THE **EVALUATED BY STUDENTS** RESEARCHER RESEARCHER THE STUDENTS Painting II Live Drawing 46 4 Ceramic I 4 Painting II 26 4 Sculpture Ceramic I 46 4 Principal of Design II Principal of Design I 24 Principal of Design II 41 Handcrafts 50 Sculpture 23 Multi-Media Design 38 294 Total N=416 Total N=8

**Table 1:** The Art Studio courses Evaluated by the researcher and students

## **Methods of Analysis**

Information and data emerging from the structured-observation schedule and students' evaluation sheet, were coded, entered into the computer, and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 15.0 for Windows and then they were examined by descriptive analysis (frequencies, total mean scores, and standard deviation).

## The Theoretical Framework

## The First and Second Generations of DBAE's Model

Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE) is model developed in the USA with funding from the Getty Education Institute for the Arts. Its stated goal was to develop the quality of the visual arts education (Alison and Hausman, 1998). The DBAE approach goes further than simply trying to understand the artist's works, it aims to improve the quality of understanding through the study four sub-disciplines; Aesthetics, Art Criticism, Art History and Art Production. The idea is that through these sub-disciplines, students become more observant, more conscious and gain a greater feel for Art. Gilbert et al. (1989) argue that "The general goal for DBAE is a developed understanding of the visual arts for all students" (p.138). It is important to remember that this model is not a totally new approach but a development of the models outlined above. However, it has a new idea for integrating the structures for teaching visual arts in the learning settings and this model is only one of several possible approaches for enriching the content of the art curriculum. (Johnson, 1990).

This model is widely implemented in schools in the USA and there are a lot of published articles, which describe the nature of this model and how it could be implemented in different schools settings and levels. However, this research aims to exam the art studio courses in light of this model rather than gives background knowledge of the DBAE with reference to teaching art studio courses at SQU.

As a consequence of widespread criticism of the first generation of the DBAE model, and as a result of educational reform in the Art Education during the 1980s and early 1990s, the second generation of DBAE was developed. Many Art educators, such as Wilson and Rubin (1997), Clark (1997), MacGregor (1997), Greer (1997) and Hamblen (1997, 1992-1993) saw the second generation of DBAE not just as an approach to instruction but also as an educational reform initiative, based on a consortium of change communities. Hamblen (1997) identifies some major changes in this model, such as; expanded and inclusive

curriculum content, Art instruction integrated with other subject areas, teacher-originated curriculum, variable approaches to assessment. According to Hamblen (1997), there have been changes regarding Art content in the second-generation DBAE, such as: (a) re-thinking on creative expression, (b) social consciousness and (c) multiculturalism (feminism, environmental responsibility, cultural pluralism, etc.

Therefore, the content of DBAE not only derived from the four disciplines but also derives from a broad range of Visual Arts, including Folk, Applied and Fine Arts forms from western and non-western cultures and covers a period from ancient to contemporary times. It also includes newer visual media, such photography, film, video, and the computer (Dobbs, 1998). However the DBAE's model is complex in terms of practice for contemporary Art Education. Dunn (1995) points out that this DBAE model is complex but argues that "To those who find the chart unrealistic or overly ambitions, remember it is a starting point so why not starts with a model that offers the highest aspirations for school art programs?" (p.45). Dunn's Model is based on a matrix consists of vertical and horizontal sections. (For more details see Dunn's book Creating Curriculum in Art).

As indicated in above, Art teaching reform started in the USA in the mid 80's with the DBAE as an approach to teaching Art in schools as well as in university. The DBAE model has evolved, has since been developed and has evolved into second generation DBAE to drive educational reform in Art Education. Wilson and Rubin (1997) point out that "We saw DBAE not just as an approach to instruction, but as an educational reform initiative based on a consortium of change communities" (p.95). In recent decades, Art Education has started to be seen as a multifaceted discipline, including such things as; the Standard Movement, Multiculturalism and Visual Culture Art Education and the integration of new Art-related technologies. Since this study concerns the implementation and evaluation of the DBAE in the higher education, the following section represents the DBAE in relation to teacher preparation for Art Education.

## **Teacher Preparation in the DBAE**

The DBAE is not only a comprehensive theory to instruction and learning in and through Art, but it is also formulated to be used in evaluating art teacher program as well as in the Adult Education, Lifelong Learning, and Art Museums as indicated by Dobbs (1998). It was designed to provide exposure to, experience with, and acquisition of content from several disciplines of knowledge, but especially from four foundational disciplines in Art. According to Dobbs (1998), education in these four disciplines plays a role to the creation, considering, and appreciation of Art, artistic processes, and the roles and functions of Art in cultures and societies. Each of these disciplines supplies a different lens or perspective from which to vision, recognize, and respect and value artworks, as the cultures in which are objects are created.

The disciplines are domains of knowledge and skill that have been and continue to be developed by individuals (artists, art critics, art historians, and philosophers of art) who conduct inquiry within the disciplines and who make contributions to their content. According to DBAE theory, the Art disciplines provide important knowledge, skills, and understanding that may enable students to have broad and rich experiences with works of Art. The definitions of the four fundamental disciplines of Art can be seen in many books and articles such as (Armstrong, 1994, Dobbs, 1998).

According to Dobbs (1998), the definitions of the four major Art disciplines are useful in order to understand their distinctions and principal roles and functions in encounters with works of Art. However, these definitions sometimes overlap. Any closed definitions of these Art sub-disciplines will eventually be shown to be insufficient because the boundaries

change and expand as related interests and new issues emerge. From the researcher's point of view, it is essential to understand these key concepts and the meaning and functions of each of these disciplines (See Spratt 1989, Crawford 1989, Risatti 1989 and Kleinbauer 1989).

The new trends for teaching Art making in higher education throughout the world focus on developing student's abilities not only with skills of making Art but also to develop their abilities concerning visual communication, aesthetic sensibility, sensory perception, emotional and intellectual development, and critical judgements towards objects of many kinds and from many cultures perspective. However, the goals of teaching Art must try to keep the balance of learning through and in art (Alison and Hausman, 1998). Also, Art educators have focused on the place of the liberal arts in training art teachers, as well as artists in colleges and universities. It has been noted, however, that art students sometimes show limited interest in these courses, focusing their energies on their studio Art classes instead (Salmon & Gritzer, 1990). As a result, if students are not interested in these courses there may a negative impact on their role as teacher of Art Education.

From the researcher's point of view, Art making is only one area of the four disciplines of the DBAE which makes a primary contribution to the understanding of Art and helps develop this understanding further. However, most Art teachers at all levels focus on Art making skills with little or no attention to the other disciplines outlined above and this is typified in the emphasis on teaching studio art at SQU. According to Kindler (1992), the DBAE requires a much broader approach than mere Art Studio instruction. It requires emphasis on other related disciplines. Moreover, the results of the study by Day (1987) indicates that "students learned critical and historical content better when it was integrated with studio activities than when it was presented in the traditional lecture-slide technique" (p.235).

The supporters of the DBAE emphasise integrating the four major disciplines in planning and implementing an Art Education programme. This has become a strong focus and goal for many educators in the field. Therefore, in Art Education, the DBAE model is considered one of the best possible for implementing a strong programme in Art Education, especially in teacher education. As a result, in the last decades, considerable attention has been paid in the USA to the implementation of DBAE in elementary and secondary schools as well a little implementation in the higher education. MacGregor (1985:24) refers to Duke (1984) who "identified a need to review college training of teachers to determine how greater cohesiveness between studio, history, criticism, and aesthetics areas might be achieved". Lovano-Kerr (1985) in her article titled 'Implantations of DBAE for University Education of teachers' also argues that the changes for preparation of teachers of Art are necessary and she emphasises that a better balance between the number of studio Art courses and those in related disciplines is needed. However, the implementation of DBAE in higher education would require major changes. From the researcher's point of view, this issue concerns more than just adding more courses in such disciplines but also concerns the need to reform Art teaching methods in higher education, which is the focus of the current research.

The most recent studies in Art Education recommend the practical implication of the DBAE model. This implementation should not only be theoretical but should also cover teaching and creating Art. Benzer (2000) found that the most important advantage of the DBAE is that it requires students to achieve more than just a successful studio production. However, the data compiled from Benzer's study also indicates that the DBAE model in teaching Art should be further investigated across a number of different school settings to examine, verify and validate the theory, practice and appropriateness of the DBAE.

There is a recommendation from Price (1988:ix) that "prospective art teachers and specialists therefore need more than a strong background in studio art if they are to provide the balanced instruction that will foster these abilities. They need the additional foundation

coursework in the other three disciplines that contribute to discipline-based art education (DBAE)". Cohen (1988:85) also supports this idea of integrating other disciplines with Art studio teaching. Maitland-Gholson (1986:27) adds "Therefore, teacher preparation must move away from the heavy emphasis on studio art toward a broader teacher preparation curriculum" (p.27). Grauer (1998) also supports this view "that teacher education in art should be more than training in specific skills and knowledge" (p.350). In the literature on Art Education, there is evidence to suggest that teachers often successfully complete required course work but with a lack of understanding of course materials and resources. Good Art teachers, therefore, must understand in considerable depth the subjects they teach. Grauer (1998:350) also, argues that the "Teachers' knowledge about art, for example, did not seem as strong an indictor of willingness to learn about art education as were the teachers' beliefs about what art education entailed". As a result, it is necessary for prospective teachers to have structured-knowledge of Art and about Art-disciplines.

Hutchens (1997) also deals with the issue of effecting change in the university setting. He emphasises that Art educators must recognise a need to change and then identify the necessary programme improvements. He states that "We in higher education must now begin to examine our ways of doing things. And the changes we make to art teacher preparation must be considered within the context of calls for reform" (p.139). According to Hutchens, in order for Art Education to work in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it must have the cooperation of university administrators and faculty in allied disciplines. He also refers to DBAE theory and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS 1994) to drive changes in the Art teacher preparation. Moreover, he argues that there is too much emphasis on studio work and less emphasis on other disciplines as he mentions his article.

Goodwin's study (1997) tries to examine Art teacher preparation. He emphasises that students need a special kind of knowing that makes instructional experiences in the arts distinct. Moreover, he argues that well-designed work in the arts can contribute to students' acquisition of basic academic competencies. All students need, as Goodwin (1997) mentions, the following components in order to obtain the necessary skills and knowledge for college preparation: (1) Knowledge of how to produce or perform works of art, (2) Knowledge of how to analyse, interpret, and evaluate works of art; and (3) Knowledge of works of art of other periods and cultures. As a conclusion, to his study, Goodwin (1997) adopts the DBAE theory as a key construct for developing the necessary competencies in teaching art.

Teaching Art in higher education in terms of DBAE is definitely important if Art Education is to develop the student-teachers' abilities and knowledge in the related disciplines as well as the Art studio domain. However, there is an issue regarding the implementation of the DBAE approach in higher Art Education programmes. This issue is related to the "Balance" of these disciplines. The original idea of DBAE is based on making a balance and synthesis among the disciplines in order to teach effectively with this approach. Moreover, Smith (1989) also supports the idea of DBAE as one integrated unit. From the researcher's point of view, the balance among these four discipline does not necessary mean equal time or content, or that it should be taught in terms of percentages, such as 25% for each discipline; it may be impossible to teach all these disciplines of arts in terms of equal time. Delacruz and Dunn (1996:75-76) question the issue of balance in the DBAE approach, they suggest "that "balanced" does not necessarily mean equal time, and that studio production and creativity could be the dominant feature of a DBAE programme as long as content from the other disciplines was given adequate treatment with production activities". Moreover, Eisner (1988) also argues that the degree of boundaries between the four disciplines can be treated as integrated or as single elements. According to Eisner, the structure of a disciple based Art lesson does not necessarily mean to teach all disciplines if there is no link or relationship among them. Therefore, to learn how to structure the disciplines in the DBAE is to learn how

these disciplines can be related with each of them having the work of Art as their starting point. These communities can be treated as either "integrated" or "insulated" elements.

From the researcher's point of view, the integrated disciplines in the Art-Studio courses need to be considered in light of the nature of students, the disciplines, and the culture of the society to enhance the process of learning. The integrated understanding and development of these three related concepts create the totality of the desired outcome of the education process in Art. In addition, the Art educators should include a minimum of the four related disciplines in their Art-Studio courses to improve their students' knowledge.

Art educational reform movements in relation to DBAE theory and practice appeared as responses to criticisms and developments of the original theory of DBAE. The reason to develop DBAE, as Greer (1997) argues "was to further the reformation of art education, moving it from a peripheral role in the curriculum to a foundational place in basic education" (p.25). One of the developments was to widen the scope of the approach so beside the four basic disciplines of DBAE, there were other disciplines that Art educators were to give attention to in order to teach Art as well as to prepare teachers of Art. These included Multicultural Art Education, Visual Cultures, New Technology in Art Education and Museum Education. As a result, the second generation of the DBAE theory responded to these new orientations to improve the quality of Art Education and move toward a comprehensive approach or as Dobbs (1998) called it a "Multifaceted Approach".

After checking the most related literature, the data was processed using the SPSS programme and findings were analysed. The findings from the structured-observation Schedule as well as from students' evaluation are presented and analysed in the following section.

# Findings of the Art Studio Courses at SQU

It should be noted that a 6-point Likert-type scale was used to evaluate the observations (scored 6-1, a very great deal-relatively very little/not at all). The results are presented using the mean values obtained for the Art Content. The relative importance the researcher gave to various statements concerning the Art Content (6-point response scale) could therefore be readily gauged. The following 'rule of thumb' was applied to. The mean response values can be classified as follows: (5.00 or higher: a very great deal, 4.00 to 4.99: a lot, 3.00 to 3.99: medium, 2.00 to 2.99: relatively little, and 1.00 to 1.9 relatively very little or not at all)

Tables in this section set the statements out, in ranked order of the mean response values for each evaluation statement with total means of the whole sample (N=4) or (N=8) and standard deviation. The total mean score for each section of the observation schedule were calculated for the four Art Studio courses. These are compared in the following series of Tables against the total mean scores for all the courses and the standard deviations (SD). **Art History** 

Table 2 shows the overall evaluation of experiences in Art History for the four Art Studio courses (N=4) as evaluated by the researcher. As it can be seen, the statement of "Historical information about the techniques only" was judged as being medium with total mean of (3.50) and standard deviation of 1.15. At the same time, the results show that a high mean score regarding this statement was given to "Ceramic I" course with mean of (4.25), which suggests that it included a lot of historical information.

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	ART HISTORY	PAN.	SC.	3D	C. I	N	TM	SD				
		II		D								
1	Historical information about the	3.75	3.75	2.25	4.25	16	3.50	1.15				
	techniques only											
2	Historical formal analysis of	2.0	2.50	1.0	1.75	16	1.81	.83				
	artworks (contextual)											
3	Information about the artists	3.75	1.25	1.25	1.0	16	1.81	1.38				
4	Artworks from a wide of	3.50	1.0	1.25	1.0	16	1.69	1.25				
	sources & cultures											

**Table 2:** Mean Scores of Art History in Art Studio courses as evaluated by the researcher

**Pan. II**= Painting II, **Sc.** = Sculpture, **C. I** = Ceramic I, 3D **D** = Principles of 3D Design II, TM= Total mean SD= standard deviation

On the other hand, a lower mean score was given to the course of "Principles of 3D Design II" (mean 2.25- relatively little historical content). Moreover, the following three statements regarding "historical formal analysis of artworks (contextual)", "Information about the artists", and "Artworks form a wide of sources and cultures" were seen to be included relatively very little or not at all in the four Art Studio courses (means of 1.69 to 1.80). However, these statements were favoured more in "Painting II" (two were rated as medium - means of 3.50 to 3.75).

Moreover, Table 3 shows the overall results for experiences in Art History for the eight Art Studio courses, as evaluated by the Students. As can be seen, provisions of experiences in "Historical information about the techniques only" were judged by Students as being medium provided with a total mean of (3.50) and a standard deviation of 1.9. This result is similar to the researcher's evaluation of this experience (Table 2). However, the highest mean was given to "Ceramic I" (mean = 4.18), which suggests that the lecturer in this course used a lot of historical-information about the development of ceramic techniques while the lecturers in the other courses provided few experiences regarding this matter.

The second highest mean score was given to the statement regarding "Artworks from a wide of sources & cultures" (total mean = 3.1 and SD = 1.7). "Principles of Design I" and "Ceramic I" had the highest means regarding this matter. The total mean score of the statement regarding "Information about the artists" scored 2.7, which indicates that the lecturers in these courses generally used relatively little information about artists. However, "Principles of Design I" had a mean of 4.04, which suggests that the lecturer of this course gave a great deal of historical-information about artists and their works.

**Table 3:** Mean Scores of Art History in Art Studio courses as evaluated by Students

	ART HISTORY	PAN . II	SC.	DES . I	C. I	LD	3D DES	HA N.	M- M D	TM	SD
1	Historical information about the techniques only	2.72	2.22	2.65	4.18	2.39	2.45	2.88	2.97	3.5	1.9
2	Artworks from a wide of sources & cultures	3.58	1.65	4.17	4.72	2.80	2.46	3.14	2.34	3.1	1.7
3	Information about the artists	2.96	2.26	4.04	3.48	2.93	2.15	1.66	2.55	2.7	1.6
4	Historical formal analysis of artworks (contextual)	2.77	1.74	2.92	3.80	2.26	2.15	2.22	2.27	2.5	1.5

**Pan.** II= Painting II, Sc. = Sculpture, **Des.** I = Principles of Design I, C. I = Ceramic I, LD= Life Drawing, **3D Design** = Principles of 3D Design II, Han. = Handcrafts, M-MD = Multi-Media Design

#### Art Criticism

As it can be seen from Table 4, the highest total mean on the four courses, regarding Art Criticism experiences, was given to the statement "Oral or written questions to be asked" (total mean score - 3.31, and a standard deviation - 0.79 as – medium). The following two statements (6&7) were judged as being relatively little provided means 2.50 and 2.75). The statement "Practising the stages of Art Criticism" was judged as very little or not at all provided (mean 1.44) and standard deviation 0.89) on all whole Art Studio courses. Also, "Panting II" had better mean scores on "Comparing & contrasting of artworks" and "Careful observation of art works made by students or mature artists" (mean 4.25 and 4.50 – particularly a lot). On the other hand, lower mean scores were given to the two statements (7&8) regarding experiences in Art Criticism in "Sculpture" and "Principles of 3D Design II" (very little or not at all - means of 1.0 to 1.50)

**Table 4:** Mean Scores of Art Criticism in Art Studio courses as evaluated by the researcher

	ART CRITICISM	PAN.	SC.	3D D	C. I	N	TM	SD
		II						
5	Oral or written questions to	3.50	3.0	3.0	3.75	16	3.31	.79
	be asked							
6	Comparing & contrasting of	4.25	2.0	2.25	2.50	16	2.75	1.48
	artworks							
7	Careful observation of art	4.5 <mark>0</mark>	1.25	1.50	2.75	16	2.50	1.41
	works made by students or	_   <						
	mature artists							
8	Practising the stages of art	2.75	1.0	1.0	1.0	16	1.44	.89
	criticism							

On the other hand, as it can be seen from Table 5, the highest total mean score in the eight Art courses regarding Art Criticism experiences was given to the statement concerning "Careful observation of art works made by students or mature artists", "Comparing & contrasting of artworks" and "Practising the stages of art criticism" (total mean of 3.5 and standard deviation of 1.8. for each statement). Experiences of this nature were judged by students as being provided a lot. Overall, "Ceramic I" appears to be including a very great deal of experiences in these areas with mean scores between (5.02 to 5.35), followed by "Principle of Design I" and "Life Drawing" as evaluated by students.

Table 5: Mean Scores of Art Criticism in Art Studio courses as evaluated by Students

	ART CRITICISM	PAN	SC.	DE.	C-I	LD	3D	HAN.	M-M	TM	SD
				I			DES.		D		
		II									
5	Careful observation of art works made by students or mature artists	3.50	1.96	4.22	5.35	3.65	3.02	3.80	2.0	3.5	1.8
6	Comparing & contrasting of artworks	3.58	2.0	3.96	5.20	4.37	2.59	3.18	2.50	3.5	1.8
7	Practising the stages of art criticism	3.23	2.0	3.87	5.02	3.98	2.51	3.29	3.11	3.5	1.8
9	Oral or written questions to be asked	3.0	3.04	3.63	5.28	2.50	2.90	3.08	3.79	3.4	1.8

Table 5 shows that there were differences between the results of the researcher's observations (Table 4) and the Student evaluations regarding experiences in Art Criticism in courses such as "Painting II", "Sculpture", "Principles of 3D Design II" and "Ceramic I". The differences can be seen both in means and the rank order of the statements. The students give higher mean scores compared with the researcher's means and this suggests that students judged these experiences as being provided a lot whereas the researcher saw them as being provided 'relatively little', 'very little' or' not at all'. Also, in terms of the rank order, the statement "Oral or written questions to be asked" ranked top according to the researcher's observation whereas this statement was ranked lower by the students in all eight courses, however, it should be noted that the mean score for this statement is still high, as evaluated by the students and the researcher. Also, it should be noted that the lowest mean scores regarding the experiences in this area were recorded in "Sculpture" and "Principles of 3D Design II", which is similar to the evaluation of the researcher in his observation (See Table 4).

#### **Aesthetics**

Table 6 shows the result of the four Art studio courses regarding Aesthetic experiences. All courses were good at providing experiences that helped students to distinguish Art from other kinds of phenomena. This statement was highly endorsed in all courses with total mean of 4.44 and standard deviation of 0.96. The highest mean score among the four courses regarding this statement was in "Painting II" with a mean of 5.25 (a very great deal). Experiences leading to reflection on "Aesthetic questions about the nature, meaning & value of art" were seen as being included relatively little (mean - 2.56 and standard deviation - 1.36). The remaining statement regarding "Aesthetics Theories" was seen as very little or not at all (mean of 1.62 with standard deviation of 1.09). Regarding the experiences in Aesthetics, the overall highest mean was for "Painting II" and then "Ceramic I" with the lower means given to "Sculpture" and "Principles of 3D Design II" (as shown in Table 6 below).

<b>Table 6:</b> Mean Scores of Aesthetics in Art Studio courses as evaluated by the research
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	AESTHETICS	PAN.	SC.	3D D	C. I	N	TM	SD
		II						
9	Distinguishing art from other	5.25	4.25	3.50	4.75	16	4.44	.96
	kinds of phenomena							
10	Aesthetic questions about the	3.75	1.50	1.75	3.25	16	2.56	1.36
	nature, meaning & value of							
	art							
11	Aesthetics Theories	3.0	1.25	1.0	1.25	16	1.62	1.09

In the same line, Table 7, shows that the students evaluated experiences in Aesthetics in the eight Art Studio courses in similar way to the researcher and the rank order for the statements is also similar to the researcher's findings (see Table 6). However, the mean scores for each statement were different in the two sets of evaluations. For example, the total mean score for the statement regarding "Distinguishing art from other kinds of phenomena" was evaluated by the students as 3.92 and by the researcher as 4.44. Overall, three statements were judged by Students as higher than 3.1 whereas, in the researcher's evaluation, the two statements from the bottom of Table 6, mean scores of 2.56 and 1.62. This suggests that the researcher saw these statements as being 'a little', 'very little' or 'not at all' provided while

the students saw them as being 'medium' provided in these Art courses. "Ceramic I" also appeared to be a good course regarding experiences in Aesthetics compared with other courses. This was followed by "Life Drawing" and "Painting II". The lowest mean scores regarding the Aesthetic experiences were given to "Sculpture" and "Principles of 3D Design II", which is a similar to the evaluation of the researcher in his observation.

<b>Table 7:</b> Mean Scores of Aesthetics in Art Studio courses as evaluated by Student
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	AESTHETICS	PAN.	SC.	DE. I	C. I	LD	3D	HAN.	M-M	T	SD
		II					DES.		D	M	
9	Distinguishing art from other kinds of phenomena	3.42	2.78	3.46	4.80	4.33	3.46	3.56	3.92	3.8	1.6
10	Aesthetic questions about the nature, meaning & value of art	3.42	2.22	3.38	4.59	3.31	2.72	2.60	3.05	3.2	1.7
11	Aesthetics Theories	3.12	2.0	2.92	4.61	3.48	2.76	2.66	2.61	3.1	1.7

## **Art Production**

Examination of the results of the statements regarding Art Production experiences in the Art Studio courses (See Table 8) show that "Information about how works of art have been created" had the highest mean score of the four Art Studio courses (mean of 4.56, followed by the statement regarding "Information about the characteristics of the discipline" (mean of 4.44 and standard deviation of 1.21). With reference to "Learning about visual problem solving", the total mean score was (3.44), which suggests that the provision of experiences in this area was judged as being medium. On the other hand, the provision of experiences concerned with "Learning about artists and their ways of working" was judged as being of relatively very little or not at all provided. As can be seen from the (Table 8), most statements regarding the provision of 'Art Production' experiences in "Painting II" were highly endorsed (a very great deal - means scores of 5. to 5.25) except the statement which focuses on "Learning about artists and their ways of working", which was judged as relatively little with a mean score of 2.50. On the other hand, this last statement was evaluated as being of relatively very little or not at all provided (mean - 1.0) in the courses of "Sculpture", "Principles of 3D Design II" and "Ceramic I". In general, the total average mean score of the top three statements in (Table 9) was (4.15) which suggests that the experiences in Art Production were seen as well provided compared with the other areas of Art History, Art Criticism, and Aesthetics.

**Table 8:** Mean Scores of Art Production in Art Studio courses as evaluated by the researcher

	ART PRODUCTION	PAN. II	SC.	3D D	C. I	N	TM	SD
12	Information about how works of art have been created	5.25	4.75	3.0	5.25	16	4.56	1.41
13	Information about the characteristics of discipline	5.25	4.50	2.75	5.25	16	4.44	1.21
14	Learning about visual problem solving	5.00	2.75	2.50	3.50	16	3.44	1.31
15	Learning about artists and their ways of working	2.50	1.0	1.0	1.0	16	1.38	.81

On the other hand, the results of the students' evaluation for experiences in Art Production can be seen in (Table 9). This Table shows that experiences in regarding "Information about how works of art have been created" were evaluated as being provided 'a

lot' by the students (mean of 4.2) and was rated as the top statement regarding experiences in this area. This evaluation was also supported by the researcher, as this statement had the highest mean in his observation (see Table 8).

Table 9: Mean Scores of Art Production in Art Studio courses as evaluated by Students

	ART	PAN.	SC.	DE. I	C. I	LD	3D	HAN.	M-M	TM	SD
	PRODUCTION	II					DES.		D		
12	Information about	4.00	2.87	4.25	5.5	4.18	3.80	4.12	4.29	4.2	1.6
	how works of art				4						
	have been created										
13	Learning about	3.92	2.41	3.79	5.1	4.62	3.41	3.57	3.66	3.9	1.6
	visual problem				6						
	solving										
14	Information about	3.64	2.78	3.54	4.8	3.73	3.51	3.73	3.76	3.8	1.6
	the characteristics of				9						
	discipline										
15	Learning about	3.04	2.13	3.50	4.2	3.04	2.51	2,04	2.63	2.9	1.7
	artists and their				2						
	ways of working										

The evaluation of the Art Studio courses by the students and the researcher also show a similar result to some degree regarding "Learning about artists and their ways of working" as this experience was judged by Students as being provided 'a little' (mean of 2.63) and by the researcher as 'a very little' or 'not at all' (mean of 1.38) and this appears at the bottom of both Tables (8 & 9). The result also shows that the lecturer of "Ceramic I" provided 'a very great deal' or 'a lot' of experiences regarding Art Production. Furthermore, most statements in this course were evaluated with high mean scores (4.22-5.54) compared with the other Art courses. This was followed by "Life Drawing", "Principles of Design I" and then the course on "Painting II". On the other hand, the students' evaluation of "Sculpture" had the lowest mean score regarding experiences in Art Production (means between 2.13 to 2.87) and this was similar to the researcher's evaluation of this course.

# THE DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

It is important to discuss the results of this study in the context of the literature review and the research question (To what extent do the Art Studio courses at SQU provide experiences in Art History, Art Criticism, Aesthetics, and Art Production?), and their implication for evaluating Art Studio courses at SQU in the light of the DBAE theory. The research question provides the structure in this part with reference to the findings of structured-observation by the researcher and students' evaluations, which were presented in previous section. Moreover, this part could be read in conjunction with the results of the research and students' findings, as presented in pervious, to get a more comprehensive view about the art contents of the four disciplines used by the art lecturers at SQU.

As identified in this study, the Art content is the subject matter or information about which students learn and think and it is not limited to the Art-Studio practice. There are four major disciplines, which contribute to the Art content of the art courses, these are: Art History, Art Criticism, Aesthetics and Art Production. It was suggested the content focus of each Art discipline and different learning processes employed by the Art lecturers could be used to characterise the each Art-Studio courses at SQU.

According to the literature review in this research, the content of Art covered in the Art Education programme is not limited to studio practice to prepare the student adequately to teach Art in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. However, students should have a programme, which allows them to develop a deep knowledge of Art History so they can understand the importance of different works of Art and the context in which the Art was created in addition to knowledge from related-fields such as Art Criticism, Aesthetics, Multicultural studies and New technology.

Since the present and past literature recommends that a strong Art Education programme should teach student-teachers to respond to Art using various methods of Art Criticism, allowing them to discover meaning in Artworks while developing the skills necessary to teach future students how to find meaning for themselves, however, the researcher's observation results and students' evaluation of the Art Studio courses show that the lecturers at SQU did not focus highly on the Art Content, which is derived from the disciplines. On the contrary, the main focus was on the discipline of Art Production, suggesting an Art-Studio orientation. The findings of Mims and Lankford (1995) study support the results of the evaluation of Art studio courses at SQU. They confirm that Art teachers spend an average of approximately 65% of the total teaching time in Art Production, 16% on Art History, 10% on Art Criticism and 9% on Aesthetics. Moreover, the teachers in their study regarded these four disciplines as either "important" or "very important", suggesting these disciplines should be included in a quality Art programme. Also, Kindler (1992) points out that Art-making has been a common practice for several millennia and this orientation has been reflected in teacher training programmes. However, the studies of MacGregor (1985), Lovano-Kerr (1985), Day (1987), Price (1988), Eisner (1988, 2000, 2002), Feldman (1988), Spratt (1989), Kleinbauer (1989), Crawford (1989), Risatti (1989), Erickson and Katter (1996) Greer (1997), Day (1997), Benzer (2000), Day (2000) and Galbraith (2001), emphasise that students learn better when the Art content is combined with Art-Studio practice rather than when it was presented in the traditional lecture-slide technique or by focusing only on Art Production.

Although the major focus of the lecturers in the all Art Studio courses was on the Art Making (Art Production), the standard in this discipline was not evaluated very highly by the students (overall mean score of 3.63) or the researcher (mean score lower than 3.5). Also, some Art courses failed to reach the test value of (>3.5) in the discipline of Art Production, such as the courses of "Sculpture", "Principles of 3D Design II", "Handcrafts" and "Multi-Media Design". Moreover, the results suggest that students in all the Art Studio courses were given fewer experiences in the discipline of Art history compared to the other three disciplines considered and that, in general, little experience was provided regarding Art criticism and Aesthetics.

In addition, some conflicts were seen between the results of the researcher's observations and the students' evaluations of Art Studio courses. For example, the provision of experiences in Art Criticism, Aesthetics and Art Production in the course of "Painting II" was evaluated highly by the researcher whereas only the discipline of Art production was evaluated highly by students. However, the students evaluated the provision of experiences in all four disciplines in the course of "Ceramics I" highly compared with the researcher who evaluated the provision of experiences in the four disciplines with mean scores lower than the total mean of Art Production, which is in opposition to the students' evaluation.

From the researcher's point of view, the reason for such a conflict may be due to different factors and various interpretations. However, the most important factor may be that the researcher observed only one group of three possible groups in "Painting II" and "Ceramic I". The second factor is that the course of "Painting II" was taught by three different lecturers, which may have affected the result of both evaluations. The third factor concerns

the experiences of the students in the course of "Ceramic I" who were in the first term of their study at SQU. As a consequence, they may have evaluated this course too highly in terms of the experiences provided in the four disciplines (total mean score from 4.0 to 5.20 for each disciplines), due to their low level of experience as students of Art at SQU. The fourth factor which may have affected the researcher's evaluations (high means for Art Criticism, Aesthetics and Art Production in the course of "Painting II" for example) concerns the nature of observation itself, as the lecturers might have changed their behaviour as a result of a researcher being present during their classes. However, there was agreement between the researcher's observation and the students' evaluation of the courses of "Sculpture" and "Principles of 3D Design II". These courses were evaluated as having relatively low mean scores in all four disciplines by both the students and the researcher, as well as having less variety of teaching methods.

This suggests that the Art content for the Art studio courses at SQU was more or less based on Art making rather than focusing on the cognitive learning involved in the four disciplines. A review of the latest literature on Art Education suggests more attention should be focused on cognitive learning in these four disciplines and points to the role of visual cultures in Art and Design Education (See Cole 1988, Wilson and Rubin 1997, May 1997, Dobbs 1998, Allison and Hausman, 1998, NAEA 1999a, 1999b and Eisner 2000 and 2002).

However, there are other factors involved, such as the knowledge of teachers (Art Educators). The NAEA (1999a) discuss the standards for Art Education faculty and emphasise that educators who have responsibility for preparing Art teachers should "hold advanced degree, have extensive knowledge and practice in art and design education" (p.6). Therefore, the knowledge and experiences of those who teach the Art Education at SQU is a significant factor in the process of preparing teachers of Art. As Green and Mitchell (1998) argue

Knowledge of art and the teacher's ability to devise inventive tasks for children is crucial. The student contribution to partnership will depend on their knowledge and the opportunity to implement what they have learned from the university courses (p.249).

As a conclusion, there are several factors affecting the outcomes of the teaching process at the creativity level in teaching Art as indicated by Dineen and Collins (2005). These are: the environment and atmosphere, teaching styles, methods and strategies, project types and outcomes, the use of rewards, assessment and evaluation, learner motivation and learning styles, personality traits of the learner and their prior knowledge and skills. From the researcher's point of view, these factors are significant for evaluating the Art-Studio courses at SQU from different points of view, however, the current research only considered art contents in terms of the disciplines of DBAE.

# **CONCLUSION**

The primary objective behind this research was to evaluate the Art-Studio courses at SQU in the light of the Discipline Based Art Education theory. The research methods used in this study have provided enough evidence to examine the Art studio courses in terms of art content, and give a general indication of the current needs for improving the quality of art teacher graduates from this program. As a result of this research, it appeared that there is a need to re-think the current practices of teaching art at SQU and a need to try to find new mechanisms for implementing best practices effectively.

The Department should adopt a clear philosophy of teaching and learning in and through Art. The researcher recommends that the Art content for the Art-based courses should be derived from Art History, Art Criticism, Aesthetics, Art production and Related-fields. These disciplines should be integrated across the programme as far as possible while Art studio work should remain at the heart of the undergraduate Art Education programme at SQU. This philosophy should be generalised to all Art-courses to ensure at least the minimum, necessary experience in each of the four disciplines for each Art-based course at SQU. The focus should be on Art Production in each studio course and the other disciplines should be regarded as vehicles to enable all the Art based activities in each course since these courses are derived from and support the Art-studio based courses.

Finally, criticising the current research is not meant to minimise the outcomes of the evaluation process of the Art studio courses at SQU but rather to provide a context for increasing the validity and reliability of the results in this study. Although the validity of the observation schedule for the Art-studio courses was derived and enhanced from an extensive review of literature in the Art Education, reliability was an issue in final fieldwork. As recommended in the literature on the research based observation, the researcher used a second observer (co-researcher) to improve the reliability for the pilot structured-observation schedule and the result was satisfactory. However, in the final fieldwork the researcher observed the courses by himself, which may limit the reliability of this instrument due to the unavailability of suitably experienced Art educators to assist with the observation. Nevertheless, within these limitations, the results of the researcher's observation did support the findings of the other research instrument; reliability was improved by adding the students' evaluation for the Art-studio courses at SQU. Moreover, it would have been better to interview same art lecturers at the Art Education department to gather more data and draw a more comprehensive picture about teaching art studio courses at SQU but their time was limited.

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