



UNC
COLLEGE OF
ARTS & SCIENCES

THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

DEPARTMENT OF ART

101E HANES ART CENTER
CAMPUS BOX 3405
CHAPEL HILL, NC 27599-3405

T 919.962.0720
F 919.962.0722
jhirschf@email.unc.edu

JAMES HIRSCHFIELD
Kenan Distinguished Professor
Department Chair

April 18, 2017

Abigail Panter,
Office of Undergraduate Education
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
214 E. Cameron Avenue CB #3504
Chapel Hill, NC 27599

Dear Dean Panter,

On behalf of the faculty of the Department of Art, I am writing to seek your approval to change the name to the **Department of Art and Art History**.

The Department of Art is comprised of two halves: practitioners and historians of art. We feel, therefore, that Art and Art History more accurately reflects the reality of our faculty make-up and speaks more fully to the intellectual and curricular contributions we make to the university and beyond. At the same time a new name for our department will help to clarify the expertise we possess during recruitment of faculty and students and when our faculty and students are applying for funding.

When our Department was constituted it was common practice to have studio artists and art historians combined in one unit. In the last quarter of the 20th century many art departments split separating their art studio and art history units into separate departments. UNC's Department of Art however, did not follow suit, recognizing instead the great benefits that can be derived from the close collaborations that a single department can afford. Indeed, our two disciplines are inter-dependent for without the work of artists, art historians would have nothing to analyze and artists rely on the critical interpretations of art historians to further their thinking about their own work.

Our curriculum has, historically, been designed so that students can take advantage of this interaction at both the undergraduate level where students who major in art history are required to take a studio class and vice versa; but also in that we offer a joint BFA major for students who want to major in both studio art and art history. At the graduate level art history faculty interact with the MFA students by doing studio visits, participating in their weekly critique course, or serving on their committees.

The art history graduate students also participate in these weekly critiques, and several have been active in curating exhibitions in which the studio graduate students are featured. On a less formal level, both the undergraduate and graduate students have student organizations through which they organize and sponsor art-related events. In short, the intellectual life of our department is intertwined and we are seeking to publicly declare this with our name.

The faculty voted for this change in 2010 at our faculty retreat and since that time we have been working to put into place the various elements that will enable a seamless transition. At this time we feel we have achieved this and do not anticipate this change incurring major disruption on any level. For instance, we have refined our undergraduate curricula on both the art history and studio sides to better serve our majors. And we worked with the Office of Undergraduate Curricula to arrange for our course offerings to reflect the distinction between practice and history with the notations of ARTS and ARTH respectively. With these in place, and with Carol Magee set to step into the position of Chair on July 1, now seems an ideal time to complete this endeavor.

Of UNC General Administration's selected Peer Institutions, only UT Austin, UVA, University of Washington, and Duke have combined departments, and each of those had both Art and Art History in the name of their departments. Among a few other Research-1 institutions with combined departments (Stanford, UConn, George Mason, and Case Western), all were named Art and Art History or Art History and Art. It is, thus, highly uncommon to find a department with both studio and art history practitioners that does not indicate this in the name of the department itself.

I believe this new name more accurately reflects the research activities of our faculty. I endorse this change and look forward to working with you as we finalize it. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Hirschfield', with a stylized, flowing script.

James Hirschfield
Kenan Distinguished Professor
Chair, Department of Art

cc: Nick Siedentop, Terry Rhodes, Kevin Guskiewicz