



PREFACE: A Brief History of MIAD

The Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design (MIAD) was founded in 1974. As a very young institution in existence for just over 35 years, its history is brief; however, its roots can be traced to the Layton School of Art, which began operation in 1920. A brief introduction of Layton's history will provide insights into MIAD's origins.

1920 – 1974: The Layton School of Art

The Layton School of Art derived its name from the Layton Art Gallery, Milwaukee's early premier art institution. The school was originally quartered in the gallery basement. In the first year there were 27 day and 60 evening students. The four-year program of study was based on a commitment to a strong, basic visual arts studio program, and the school rapidly gained a reputation for the excellence of its Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. While retaining close affiliation with the Layton Art Gallery, the school and the gallery eventually became separate and distinct organizations, each with its own Board of Trustees.

For the first 30 years, Layton's growth was steady and its financial resources adequate, though by no means abundant. After World War II, however, circumstances throughout higher

education changed dramatically as a result of the GI Bill. Layton's enrollment grew to over 400 full-time students; in addition, several hundred students were enrolled in the evening school. In 1951 a new building was constructed near downtown Milwaukee, where Layton prospered financially and academically for the next 19 years.

Proposed freeway construction led to demolition of the building in 1969 and forced the school to find a new location: this move can be seen as the first in a series of ill-advised choices that eventually imperiled the college's future. The new campus was located in the north suburban area of Glendale, which isolated the college from the cultural and professional life of the central city, made commuting difficult for many students, and offered almost no suitable student housing.

Leadership changes that caused friction between the administration and the faculty added to these problems. Ultimately, the college's financial condition deteriorated, and a major rift between the board and faculty ensued. Facing a bitter labor dispute and ever-mounting deficits, Layton's trustees voted in 1974 to close the school. Shortly after Layton's closing, a group of former Layton faculty and students initiated plans for a new school, which they dreamed would embody Layton's original precepts. From this group and their vision, the Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design emerged.

1974 – Present: The Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design

The creation of a new independent college of art was in part possible because no other such institution existed in the state of Wisconsin. However, the creation of a new college was just that: a college begun anew, without facilities, funds, fundraising, etc. For example, the seven founding faculty worked the first year without compensation. It is important to note that MIAD is a 35-year old institution and, therefore, does not benefit from the traditions inherent in much older organizations, such as brand recognition, regional and national reputation, alumni and industry support, or a substantial endowment.

MIAD's early years were times of challenge, with lean economic circumstances, inadequate instructional space and a lack of institutional identity. That this young college, initially named the Milwaukee School of the Arts, was able to prosper, let alone survive, was testament to the dedication

of the small group of selfless educators who provided leadership and skilled instruction to its students. The college was housed in a warehouse building in Milwaukee's Third Ward, immediately south of downtown. To better reflect the full range of disciplines offered, the college was subsequently renamed the Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design, and in 1983 hired its first President from outside the institution, the first who was not one of the institute's founders. This was a significant step, both practically and philosophically. The President's appointment provided needed administrative expertise and stability, and served notice that MIAD intended to gain a place among the nation's leading art colleges. The college first achieved NASAD accreditation in 1982 and HLC accreditation in 1987 (more detail follows).

In 1989, after spending five years in another leased Third Ward building, MIAD purchased the Milwaukee Terminal Building, 273 E. Erie Street, located on the Milwaukee River. The purchase price of \$2.2 million and the subsequent \$6.2 million renovation costs were met by contributions from community foundations, individuals and corporations, and a small mortgage. Renovation, which began in fall 1991, was completed in summer 1992, making it possible for MIAD to move to its present location for the 1992-93 school year. Named the Jane Bradley Pettit Building to honor the primary donor, the facility comprises 250,000 square ft. on five floors, providing abundant studio and classroom space, and an unusually high ratio of square footage per student.

In spring 1993, the college reorganized its system of academic administration. Previously, the faculty had extensive involvement in the college's administrative and managerial affairs, based on a founding emphasis on faculty involvement in all facets of institutional life. The reorganization was based on a system more similar to that of other institutions of higher education: Governance was shared in some areas, especially curriculum, but management control shifted to an administrative team of four division deans (Fine Arts, Design, Foundations, and Liberal Studies), a Vice President for Academic Affairs, a Vice President for Administrative Services and the President. Four years later, the NASAD visitor's report noted among faculty a "lingering sense of disempowerment."

In 1994, a five-story facility at 222 E. Chicago Street, less than two blocks from the Pettit Building, was added. The top three floors of the building were developed as a residence hall to house up to 172 students; the two vacant lower floors and basement were designated to become the William F. Eisner Museum of Advertising & Design. Originally negotiated under a long-term lease, the residence hall building was purchased in 1995, enabling MIAD to more effectively recruit students from outside the southern Wisconsin region and enhancing the campus culture.

In 1997, MIAD purchased and renovated the historic building at 266 E. Erie Street, directly across the street from the Pettit building. The building was remodeled according to designs created by students in MIAD's Interior Architecture + Design program to serve as the Student Union.

A \$20 million capital campaign was inaugurated in fall 1998 but did not fully succeed. Part of the campaign was a lead gift of \$1 million to, in part, create the Eisner Museum: Unfortunately, the total cost of museum renovation was \$3 million. This expense was a contributing factor in subsequent substantial deficits that resulted in a \$10 million long-term debt.

In spring 1998, MIAD created plans to initiate its first graduate program, in cooperation with the College of Communication at Marquette University: a Master of Arts in Professional Design and Communications. To provide future support for this program, MIAD acquired two additional buildings in fall 1999: a 28,000 square ft. facility at 117 N. Jefferson St. and 143 N. Broadway, adjacent to MIAD's Student Union. When the financial inadequacies of the plan for a graduate program became apparent, and when MIAD was faced with an overall financial crisis, the graduate program was set aside.

At this point, the financial crisis threatened the college's existence. In 2001 and 2002, the college experienced \$2 million in operating deficits each year. One building was sold, budget cuts resulted in salary cuts and employee benefits were curtailed. Major fundraising efforts reduced the unrestricted fund deficit by \$1.1 million; however, financial and management difficulties continued.

In 2003, the trustees asserted their leadership role, which resulted in a change of presidential leadership. An Interim President with 20 years of institutional experience and credibility among faculty

and staff was appointed while a presidential search was undertaken; in 2004, another building was sold. A new President was appointed in 2005, but his term lasted less than one year. The college again returned to the leadership of an Interim President, and a second search process was initiated, this time with more positive results.

In Spring 2007 the new President, Neil Hoffman, was hired. Hoffman brought with him a 25-year track record of successfully leading and transforming struggling art and design institutions.

*(Resume in **Resource Room – Intro. #1**)* The impact of this new president was immediate.

Equipped with the experience of how to analyze and improve single-purpose institutions, he brought a wealth of knowledge and energy that was previously external to college. He immediately embraced the faculty and staff and stressed the importance of climate, buttressed by a philosophy of inviting all stakeholders into the process of continuous improvement. He introduced new institution-wide planning efforts and a new enrollment management approach that resulted in a 34% increase in new students after one year (2008-09), and the largest overall enrollment in the college's history. The fall 2008 total enrollment was exceeded again in fall 2009. The institutional transformation initiated by MIAD's new leadership and planning forms the core of this self-study report.

Accreditation History of MIAD

MIAD is regionally accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association (HLC-NCA) and professionally accredited by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD). MIAD's record of accreditation is as follows:

Regional Accreditation

As early as June 1974, MIAD had contacted HLC-NCA regarding accreditation, and by December 1 of that year had prepared a Status Study Report, which was submitted to HLC-NCA in application for Candidacy Status. While the Institute's first efforts to achieve candidacy status failed, the visiting team was encouraged and subsequently MIAD received initial regional accreditation by HLC-NCA in 1987. MIAD was granted continuing accreditation in 1993, and renewal of its continuing accreditation

in 2000. The date for the current review was extended forward for a variety of reasons, including accommodation of a Joint Evaluator's Visit with NASAD.

Professional Accreditation

MIAD was granted membership (accreditation) by NASAD in 1982. Continuing accreditation membership was achieved in 1987 and again in 1997. The proposed 2007-08 re-accreditation visit was re-scheduled to accommodate a Joint Evaluator's Visit with HLC-NCA.

*(For documents from prior HLC & NASAD accreditation visits, see **Resource Room – Intro. #2**)*