

Representative Policies for Displaying Art in Student Union Galleries and Public  
Spaces in the United States

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Master's Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and  
State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts in Education

in

Higher Education and Student Affairs  
(Education Leadership and Policy Studies)

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April 8, 1999  
Blacksburg, Virginia

Keywords: Art, Educational Policy, Gallery, Public Spaces, Display of Art  
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(ABSTRACT)

The purpose of this descriptive study was to establish a comprehensive and representative portrait of written policies with respect to displaying art in student unions in the United States. This study was designed to answer the following question: What policies are implemented in member colleges and universities of the Association of College Unions International with respect to the display of art in galleries and public spaces in student unions in the United States?

One hundred institutions were selected for study by a stratified random sampling of the 1997 membership list of the Association of College Unions International. A total of 67 institutions responded including 16 research universities, 33 comprehensive state universities, 15 liberal arts colleges, and three community colleges. The result of the document analysis demonstrated that the majority of institutions in the sample, 60 percent, do not have a policy with respect to displaying art in the gallery or public spaces within the unions. Only 24 percent of the institutions in the study have such a written policy. The remaining institutions, 16 percent, have gallery mission statements or exhibition contracts. All policies received were classified according to the a priori evaluation criteria set in the study. Representative policy statements were formulated from the information received.