Advisory Board Meeting Regarding Porterville College Commercial Art Associates in Art Degree
March 29, 2022 (6:00 - 6:30 pm)

Meeting called by:
Jim Entz, Fine Art Faculty, Porterville College

Attendees:

Seth Gravette, Senior Designer at FreshForm Interactive, Owner/Designer of Studio Hewn
Diran Lyons, Fine Art Faculty, Porterville College
Michelle Miller-Galaz, Dean of Instruction at Porterville College
Roger Perez, Director of Communications and Community Relations, Porterville College
Martha Widmann, Founder of Martha Widmann Design

Advisory Board Introductions

Jim Entz initiates the meeting at 6 pm and has all attendees introduce themselves and briefly describe their backgrounds.

Seth Gravette notes that he is the Senior Designer for FreshForm Interactive, a UX Research & Digital Innovation Consultancy in San Diego, California. Gravette specializes in graphic design and interactive web design with a degree in Visual Communication from UC Davis. He is also the owner and designer of a woodworking studio fabricating custom furniture and objects.

Roger Perez notes that he worked in broadcast television and then owned his own production company and hired dozens of video producers. In his work at CSU Bakersfield, in Parks and Recreation, the Kern County Museum, and Kern County Mental Health, he hired and supervised both video producers and graphic designers regularly.

Martha Widmann notes that she is the founder of Martha Widmann Design, a freelance company specializing in graphic design and print media. She also served New York and Los Angeles agencies, creating print and magazine content.

Porterville College Commercial Art AA Coursework

Jim Entz addresses the Commercial Art AA learning outcomes and describes the program curriculum to the advisory membership as follows: The Commercial Art Associate in Arts Degree will prepare students to work in the fields of graphic design, illustration, and time-based media. Students will learn how to do design layouts in advertising, print, and digital media and will learn to produce illustrations for books and graphic novels, magazines and the web and for advertising, editorial, and technical purposes for time-based media, students will learn motion graphics and how to produce video content for commercial and creative applications. The degree also prepares students for transfer to a four-year university to continue their studies toward earning a B.A. or B.F.A. in Commercial Art, Graphic Design, illustration, or Digital Video Production.

Diran Lyons makes a presentation that synopsizes the design coursework he teaches, sharing some student project examples in relation to the following courses:

CMRT P102: COMMERCIAL LAYOUT AND DESIGN
Students focus on information architecture, text and image relationships, and brochure design and poster design. The culmination of these skills establishes the ability to promote films or video portfolios through press kits, which dovetails strategically with the Digital Video Production CGRA P113 curriculum.

CGRA P110: INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL ART
In the first half of the semester, students acquire image editing skills that lead up to the creation of digital collage imagery, which is useful to poster design and product promotion. The second half of the semester concentrates on video image capture and digital video editing, whereby students create short films that explore image-to-word relationships, which helps strengthen the student's ability to represent ideas within motion media.

CGRA P113: DIGITAL VIDEO PRODUCTION
Students apply video design schemes through composition, color, depth of field, and image exposure. They learn to operate sound, camera, and editing equipment appropriate for single camera production. Students will articulate a clear and comprehensive creative concept which is verified during development and resolution. They will also examine historical and contemporary trends and aesthetics in moving image art. The course balances technique and equipment operation with critical ideas on film theory, most notably the writings of Gilles Deleuze, who focused his philosophical reflections on shot qualities and narrative arrangement.

It is noted that to earn the degree, the required classes are:

ART P106 2-D DESIGN
ART P114 RENAISSANCE TO CONTEMPORARY ART HISTORY
CGRA P110: INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL ART
CGRA P113: DIGITAL VIDEO PRODUCTION
CMRT P102: COMMERCIAL LAYOUT AND DESIGN
CMRT P103 ILLUSTRATION

Advisory Board Feedback

Statements in the order they were offered:

Seth Gravette: "To me, the curriculum seems right on track. Everything you presented is really good. However, I didn't notice any projects focusing specifically on typography. I don't know if that was just something that you didn't cover in the presentation, but typography is one thing I would like to see emphasized. Everything else was sharp, and it looks like a great curriculum. All the directives seemed very appropriate as well."

Roger Perez: "I think it's very exciting how this Commercial Art AA program and the video certificate overlap in very meaningful ways. There is a great type of cross-pollination between them. Everything complements each other and therefore leads to mixing and matching course content very fluidly. It seems to be the right approach for our era. Things are so much more complex these days. It used to be that someone would just take photography, for example, and could be a photographer, or take design and be a designer, but this seems to be much more thoughtful in how a program strategically integrates several media, practices, and thought processes to give students a variety of employment options in a world where you have to be knowledgeable about branding in so many ways."

Seth Gravette: "That's another thing I thought of during the presentation: coursework on website construction. I think that any of the classes in the curriculum could incorporate web design, or perhaps you could have a full course on web design, even though the web user experience is constantly evolving, which understandably makes curriculum development very challenging, even problematic. But at minimum, I think the program should introduce the issue of digital interactivity, inviting the user on a webpage or digital design to become active and not only passively experiencing someone's designs."

Roger Perez: "I agree. A strong course might be "the future of media design," because when you think of website design it's always evolving, taking very interesting turns, with sort of weird corporate directions at least."

Jim Entz: "I think to Seth's comment about interactivity, interactivity is critical. It's pervasive in gaming, for example, as well. Our students are very much focused on interactivity in the way they navigate through the web and so on. It's a really interesting area to investigate and bring into the program in different ways."

Roger Perez: "I think, again, like with the video certificate, I see the potential for internship opportunities for students. So, the question becomes, 'How can you integrate those opportunities into the curriculum while also forming partnerships with local businesses?'"

Martha Widmann: "This issue is kind of something that I struggled with when I was getting started and founding my business. Once you move past the internships, is there any kind of prep or intro into how one estimates a job or the financial aspects of what being a designer involves? Throughout my college experience, that area didn't factor into my formal education. I had to rely on trial and error and real-life learning experiences. I was just trying to find my way through the financial aspects, the bookkeeping, and estimating and knowing what to charge, what I thought might seem reasonable, or outrageous, or whatever. These are all pivotal issues in this field, although it may be too soon to introduce such things at this level. It just seems very relatable to one of the outcomes Jim mentioned, where students are processing, researching, and so on. In light of that, how should budgeting factor into their analysis? I think that would be a good thing to introduce to students at the very least. As a designer, what is my skill worth? What is the work I am able to provide for others worth?"

Meeting Adjournment

With the noted recommendations, everyone agreed that the program should go forward.

Jim Entz and Diran Lyons thanked the advisory members for their time and suggestions. The first meeting was adjourned at 6:30 pm.