

Attendees

Board Members:

Cait Molloy, Director of 500 Capp Street Foundation & The David Ireland House

Chris Grunder, Director/ Co-Founder of Bass & Reiner Gallery

George del Barrio, Founder/Director of the Vanderbilt Republic

Damon Pablo Escudero, Director/Street Photographer

Chuck Kelton, Custom Printer

Leslie McCall, Chair, OCC Photo

Anthony Nex, Photographer, Alumnus, SMC Adjunct Faculty

Saman Assefi Photography Assistant

Carie Beene, Photo Retoucher

Hugh Kretchmer, Photographer

Joe Elgar, Photo Retoucher

SMC Full time faculty and Classified Staff:

Craig Mohr

Josh Sanseri

Josh Withers

Ed Mangus

Hannah Nelson

Sean Blocklin

Date: February 5th, 2021

Location: Zoom Conference Meeting

Start time: 6:00pm

End Time: 7:30pm

I. ORGANIZATIONAL FUNCTIONS

Josh Sanseri introduces all attendees and their respective backgrounds in photography.

Mission of the meeting: To get feedback from working professionals and attain information to contribute and evolve the Photography Program at Santa Monica College.

II. TOPICS DISCUSSED

A. Discussion about launching Analog Certificate and Photographer's Assistant Certificate, and Digital Technician certificate; skillset learned through our programs will lead to employment.

B. The photo program has changed a few years ago we eliminated classes that were a huge barrier to the program and we also incorporated product and people photography.

C. We have tried to make the program much more equitable. Give students access to the same resources. Students can get through the program without spending a whole lot of money.

- D. Students in the advanced Photo courses can rent equipment that they can take off campus.
- E. We have to work harder to promote the idea that it won't cost anything and that this curriculum is affordable.
- F. Find a way to justify photo program; what classes lead directly to photo careers?
- G. Consensus that having knowledge of film photography makes you a well-rounded photographer
- H. Discussion about all the jobs that surround Photography i.e. Virtual reality, Computer Graphics, retouching, etc.
- I. Discussion about essential software that Santa Monica College should be teaching with. I.E. Helicon, Focus Software, Capture one. Integrate more Bridge use.
- J. Discussion of launching a one credit Capture One class
- K. Discussion about potential internship opportunities.
- L. Path to employment, how to quantify statistics?
- M. Look at job descriptions that look at Photography as a skill needed.

III. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. From your perspective on the world of photography & art, what do you see as a clear path to employment for photography students/graduates?

A path to employment is difficult to quantify because there are employers that hire photographers for shoots and then there are others that hire photographers for edits. It is important to focus on a deep understanding of photography so that students can build a solid skill set. Perhaps offering students more internship opportunities will give students exposure and an opportunity to network in the photo industry.

2. What are some of the more sustainable entry level jobs qualified students should expect to see upon graduation?

A photographer's assistant comes to mind when thinking about an entry level job. Another option that could branch out from a photography background is production assistant, marketing assistant, and of course freelance photography work. In order to establish oneself as a freelance photographer a student must have a photo portfolio to show to clients and have an entrepreneurial spirit.

3. What are the essential skills you see as vital for a student to launch a successful career in a photography related field of employment? In five years from now, do you see these skills changing?

Essential skills vital for a student to launch a successful career are work ethic, craftsmanship, and critical thinking. Another skill is that a student must develop is the ability to communicate articulately. It is important that the student has a great sense of self because they will need to sell themselves. These basic skills are essential to thrive in the Photo industry and most likely will continue to be the case five years from now.

4. Is there any essential photography-related software that we should consider teaching? (Other than Photoshop, Lightroom, Capture One, Adobe Premiere).

Awareness of computer graphics, animated GIF's , video motion graphics, Helicon, Bridge, Focus Software, Capture one, perhaps set up a curriculum to have students get Capture One Certification.

Santa Monica College Photo program should consider teaching an awareness of computer graphics class and an awareness of virtual reality class.

5. Do you see how skills learned in the darkroom directly relate or lead to a student's employability?

Learning film photography forces you to get a really good exposure; it forces you to get really good contrast on pictures. Students who learn darkroom photography are going to be better at their craft. Students that take darkroom related classes invest more time in the quality of a photo; there is a connection to the history of photography. Doesn't directly lead to success in employability but it helps students become more well-rounded and in turns better photographers. There are photographers out there that make digital images look like film, we (at SMC) teach film, we still have a darkroom, other schools don't, that will make us marketable.

6. In a 2 year program (4 semesters), do you see added value to students by broadening their curriculum to include skills-based courses in video, graphic design, fine art, etc.? Or is their time better spent building their technical skills and concentrating primarily on the craft of photography?

A clear path for photo students is to just have them focus on their craft. Students will be more active in learning if they are participating in a class they enjoy instead of taking classes that students take only because it fits some sort of requirement. Time will be better spent building technical skills and concentrating primarily on the craft of photography. It can be productive to make students aware of video graphic design and fine art but not teach them mastery in any particular skill.

IV. **ADJOURNMENT: 7:30pm**

A. Josh Sanseri thanks all attendees for coming and participating in the Photo Advisory Board Meeting