

5. TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

TEACHING GOALS

I believe in the importance of helping students gain an understanding of the fascinating world of visual communication and it is my goal to share with students the knowledge and skills required to successfully communicate through design. Goals of particular focus are helping students to:

- Engage curiosity and enthusiasm for visual communication
- Develop a clear understanding of the principles of design
- As their understanding of principles matures, to challenge the design status quo
- Gain the skills they need to succeed beyond the classroom (examples: marketing, presentation).
- Learn about the fine art and historical movements that influenced design

VALUES AND ETHICS

Years of teaching experience have helped me understand the value of creating an environment of mutual respect within a diverse student group. Students arrive on campus from a small town, a megalopolis and everywhere in between. They come from different cultural, religious, ethnic and social backgrounds. They come for the same purpose however to learn and that learning is best facilitated in an environment of respect between students and their peers and between students and the instructor. I strive to facilitate positive discussions and critiques in an effort to help students see where they are and give them the courage to reach their potential. In a constructive way I work to identify students' strengths and encourage them to further improve upon both strengths and areas for development.

STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES

Teaching Focus

My focus and intent at Saginaw Valley State University is to prepare students for careers in Graphic Design. A career in Graphic Design is most likely in one of three areas including:

- In-House Designer—A full-time graphic designer producing all graphics for a single company
- Studio Designer—A graphic designer building graphics from concept to completion for various clients
- Freelance Designer—A designer operating independently, providing graphic design service to various clients

Graphic Design as a career is broad in its scope of responsibilities, which include:

- Print publications
- Web design
- Signage and way-finding
- Advertising
- Time based media (video graphics)
- Packaging
- Environmental design
- Logo and identity
- App/graphic user interface design

I structure the material and my teaching approach to prepare our students for all of these job possibilities.

Course Goals

1. It is imperative that students master the fundamental principles of art/design.
2. A focus on market enables students to understand that in order for design to communicate successfully, the design must appeal to the audience and convey the correct message for the represented client.
3. Problem solving skills and the ability to create multiple solutions to determine the most effective and meaningful impact on the audience is crucial.
4. A focus on production of professional work is key to success. Effective ideas become reality when students create working solutions by mastering the software/hardware/code skills.
5. Strong oral and written communication skills give our students an edge in the field of graphic design.

Once hired, our students will not be working in a vacuum. Effectively explaining concepts is required to sell any idea. In order to prepare them for this I have included both written and verbal explanations in each class project. To develop their written skills, each project requires a written outline of the market, and their explanation of how they are going to appeal to that market.

Students also need to be comfortable with presenting their solutions to an audience. We do this through critiques. Each student presents their piece to the entire class, explains why their solutions is an excellent one for the market, and how it meets the client's needs. Occasionally, the opportunity will arise for the students to present to the actual client. I have found that working with actual clients in the classroom increases students commitment to the projects.

6. A well-designed and well-rounded portfolio showcasing an excellent body of creative work is key to securing a job in the field of Graphic Design. This includes both an online and physical portfolio.

Student portfolios are developed in several ways. First, the projects I choose as classroom assignments are worthy of their portfolio. Next, the Graphic Design RSO (AIGA SVSU Student Group) participates in the yearly Student Portfolio Review event at which students' portfolios are reviewed and critiqued by design professionals. Finally, the Art 450 Portfolio Development course enables students to reach their portfolio goals. Additionally, the Art 354 Web Design helps students develop web portfolios.

Summary: SVSU Courses Taught

Art 250 - Introduction to Graphic Design
Art 260 - Introduction to Computer Graphic Design
Art 333 - History of Graphic Design
Art 350 - Typography and Color in Design
Art 354 - Web Design
Art 355 - Logo and Business Identity
Art 370 - Digital Imaging
Art 380 - Publication Design
Art 391 - Graphic User Interface Design
Art 390 - Packaging Design
Art 450 - Design Portfolio Development
Art 490 - Cardinal Solutions
Art 492 - UX (User Experience) Design
Art 499 - Independent Study - Graphic Design
Art 496 - Independent Study - Field Experience in Design

GRADING

Expectations for the class are clearly set forth. Students' work is evaluated based on design principles as well as their ability to demonstrate an advance in their knowledge and or ability to communicate visually. I expect hard work from students.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS

The students' academic growth and success is of paramount importance. I believe it is important to show students my interest in their academic journey by making myself available outside the classroom during regular office hours and via email to answer questions and offer encouragement and support. I am interested in seeing students succeed beyond the classroom.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER FACULTY MEMBERS

Becoming well acquainted with other instructors through development of positive relationships provides a valuable resource for both myself and students. To grow as an instructor one must interact with peers, accept critique and offer encouragement to challenge each other in the continuing pursuit of knowledge.

6. TEACHING DOCUMENTS

C. EVALUATION REPORTS — University of Idaho

6. TEACHING DOCUMENTS

D. First Year Review

6. TEACHING DOCUMENTS

E. Second Year Review

6. TEACHING DOCUMENTS

F. Forth Year Review