Eastern Center for Arts and Technology

Program Review
Final Report

COMMERCIAL ART

2016

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ANALYSIS OF LABOR MARKET DATA

Data from the U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook, indicates expected growth in fields related to the commercial art program. The most significant growth appears to be related to app development and more interactive design with a much faster than the average growth of 22% through the year 2022. Job opportunities should also grow upwards of 7% for graphic designers and 12% for advertising, promotions and marketing. Similar growth will be seen in areas of industrial design, multimedia and animation, however, web will see a growth of approximately 20% from 2012 to 2022. Designers are expected to face strong competition for all available positions with greatest opportunities for persons who work with multiple types of media, such as websites and print publications.

STUDENT COMPLETION, PLACEMENT AND FOLLOW-UP INFO

The graduating class of Commercial Art in June 2015 indicates that 95% of all students completed all tasks for their career objective and received a final grade of 70% or above. Each year our number of graduates moving on to post-secondary training is near 100%. Commercial Art students placing Advanced and/or Competent reached 92% in 2014. Based on the labor market data and the graduate placement data for EASTERN's students, it was agreed that the Commercial Art Program should be continued.

PROGRAM SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

1. Can 3D digital fabrication be incorporated into the current Commercial Art program? Does it align with the Program of Study?
   The program of study could easily accommodate the inclusion of 3D fabrication. The ability to envision an idea on paper, then on screen and bring it to existence in physical form would be an excellent opportunity to think through ideas. Additionally students could create subjects for photography and craft models for packaging and restaurant projects that are currently within the curriculum. Making ideas "real" is why people want to become designers.

2. Does the current amount of computers/workstations provide access and opportunity for the current enrollment?
When a workstation breaks down, project and instructional time is lost in addressing the issue instead of having available stations for a student to use while the issue is repaired. In addition the current number of workstations is not sufficient for the current enrollment. In any class, there are more students than stations, requiring some students at desks while waiting for computer availability. This can be especially difficult for students without access to a computer at home. Additionally, instructors often need to turn over their instructional stations and retired laptops to provide enough resources for student work.

3. How can infographics be incorporated into the current Commercial Art program? What is needed to do this?
Infographics are ultimately a way to explain a concept faster by combining visuals with words. Imagery can be either illustration or photography. Students are learning the technical skills in order to do this. Through curriculum and assignments the concept of this tactic could be introduced. This would be valuable because infographics need to communicate an idea better with the combination of words and image than either could alone. This is something students could use to become better critical thinkers.

4. Could the COA OAC make recommendations to better utilize the space allocated to the COA program?
Based on both past and expected enrollment, the COA OAC believes the large space now used for photography will be better suited for lecture and workstations. This will maximize appropriate instructional space without increasing the footprint of the COA space.

<p align="center">EMERGING TRENDS</p>

There have been significant shifts in the design landscape in the last three years. As design moves from paper to screen and out into the world, there is an ever-increasing need for professionals trained to execute and lead. This need spans marketing, entertainment, industrial, education and other industries.

Of the many trends, the top three that appear to have lasting significance are:

1. **Infographics** - Infographics are graphic visual representations of information, data or knowledge intended to present information quickly and clearly. The field of information design is seeing resurgence in recent years due to the rise in social media and the taste for quickly consumable and sharable images. Also worth noting is the dramatic increase in data accessibility. Ninety percent of ALL data is 2-3 years old.

2. **Interaction Design** – Some examples include websites, apps, kiosk interfaces and more technologies have evolved to the point of providing a custom user experience in response to data input. This allows users to create the digital experience they want for entertainment or information. Users are beginning to expect to have a personal experience when using media. Design now needs to accommodate guiding a user down different paths or guiding them to the information they seek. The tools and education needed to perform these tasks such as Pixate, Marvel or FramerJs change what a designer needs to know.

3. **3D Digital Fabrication** - Which is a process that joins design with the Construction/Production through the use of the additive manufacturing processes. Previously called "3D printing", the term fabrication now more appropriately conveys the ability to conceive an object on a computer screen and render it in the real world. This technology is being used in industries as diverse as medical devices and fashion. Designers are using this technology to explore ideas through rapid prototyping and the manufacture of finished goods.

In addition to these primary drivers of change, there are subtler factors creating shifts in the commercial art industry.

Commercial Space - Promotional space is no longer just printed or digital. It is now almost anywhere to be imagined. With digital becoming so prevalent in outdoor medias as well as any mobile device being a conduit for promotions, designers can utilize everything from vehicles to stair treads as places to promote, persuade or inform.

Modular Design – along with "divisible design", these trends are the next phase of repurposing content. Sharing expertise as a form of marketing is growing and organizations are looking for ways to maximize their impact with the least amount of effort and expense. Modular design is being applied to content like infographics, wherein sections can be viewed individually, as part of the larger whole or even sliced apart to create multiple individual pieces out of one. This provides more flexibility to extract portions for sharing on social media, helping to extend the content's reach. For example a single quote may be extracted from a white paper and designed for Instagram. An e-book chapter may become an infographic. It's flexible visual storytelling that extends the usability of everything that is developed.

Responsive Typography- Content scaled for a better reading experience. Today we find ourselves dealing with an ever-expanding list of devices and display resolutions. Using responsive relative scale, designers can adjust type proportions appropriately for the device or resolution.
Designers will also consider the user's reading distance (from the screen), so that font sizes are "perspectively proportional" to reading a printed piece. Today we deal with a variety of screen sizes and resolutions. Content needs to scale appropriately from a smartwatch to a 90 inch TV screen and more importantly designers need to be aware of both. This makes things much more complicated.

Typography – Web typography has come far in the last five years. Previously, web fonts were limited to what any user would already have installed on his/her computer. Now there are open source fonts, Google web fonts and technology to embed a font in a website. This allows for more choices in online design and the ability to have consistency across print and digital design.

TECHNOLOGIES

In addition to the many above-mentioned emerging trends, the Commercial Art OAC also noted the following technologies:
- Software and updates being done through Cloud technology. This has created a shift to subscription pricing models for most software. This trend has a significant impact on designers in added expenses and functionality. Being able

to share files with printers, clients and other designers will become even more difficult if they are not on the same software version. It also adds significantly to the expense of using professional software and forces designers to adjust constantly to changes in how the software works.

- With the advancement of Adobe Illustrator for so many professional illustrators in the industry, a variety of drawing tablets can sincerely assist to better utilize the drawing styles of the varied pen tools within the software.
- App building technology. Designers are now expected to have some familiarity with the build process of applications. When interviewing the standard has shifted to include presenting an online portfolio. MagPlus is a free tool for this. Tyler School of Art students are using it to create publications in iPads.
- Color calibration is becoming more of a challenge when designs are created, reviewed and often delivered exclusively on digital devices. Eizo monitors have built in calibration software and, while expensive, are considered the best option for displaying critical color.
- Reflector is software that allows the screen of one device to be broadcast on another device.
- Lightroom, a tool used to color correct images, is now included in the Adobe Creative Cloud suite of tools.

TYPES OF SKILLS REQUIRED FOR EMPLOYMENT

In all industries related to Commercial Art there are many skills needed for entry level employment. Such skills and proficiencies have continued to dramatically increase with higher-level thinking, training and experience sought by employers. Employers are looking for much more than just artistic talent and employability skills or 'soft skills' are being demanded more than previously. The following is a summary list of what the COA OAC felt was of most importance.

- Creativity, strong design sense and artistic ability
- Computer Skills; specifically proficiency in Adobe Creative Suite
- Production skills
- Presentation skills, articulate
- Professionalism with strong time management skills
- Responsible and detail-oriented

- Communication skills – communicating needs & managing, negotiating, selecting, finding vendors, clients and audience as well as coworkers
- Trainability
- Able to work in a team setting as well as an individual and utilize appropriate decision making in either scenario
- StartSmart which is a solution for gender wage gap and gives negotiating starting salary strategies

RECOMMENDATIONS & TIMELINES

In order to provide continued growth in the Commercial Art program several upgrades, additions and or replacements are needed:

Paper Trimmer:

Currently in COA, when a large format poster is printed (up to 4'x8'), trimming the poster involves laying out the poster on the classroom floor and using an exacto knife to trim the poster. The Paper Trimmer would eliminate this step by allowing us to feed the poster through the trimmer and remove the excess material saving time and waste.

Vinyl Printer:

Currently in industry being trained on how to pre-press and print to a vinyl printer is in high demand both in the promotional material industry and in the colleges to which we send our students. Students would have an advantage heading to college being trained in vector printing.

Photo Monitor:

Currently in the Photography studio, demonstrating the current rotation assignment by the instructor involves setting up the shoot, lighting it and photographing it. Then, so the students can view the instructor's work/example, the camera is passed around by students. Adding a monitor that would be tethered to the camera would immediately display the image on the monitor (large view) so all students could review and the

instructor could comment and explain.

Ceiling Mounted Lighting System:

Recommended for the 2 portrait studios, the ceiling mounted lighting system would allow the students moving on to a photography related career/college to have experience using the lighting systems that they will be using both at college and larger photography companies. This also will eliminate the electrical cords lying around on the floor causing a potential tripping hazard.

Drawing Tablets:

The implementation of Wacom tablets in EASTERN's COA program would give students access to advancements in the Adobe Suite's function that are difficult, if not impossible to implement with the use of a traditional mouse or trackpad. Being trained to use a Wacom device makes illustrators more employable because it is an industry standard that the tool be used in most illustration, drafting and 3d modeling/animation softwares.

A Wacom tablet allows industry professionals to minimize time spent on illustration projects, and maximizes profitability. Because of this, it is a staple tool of freelance illustrators who are often paid hourly and expected to compete on a tight deadline schedule.

3D Printing:

Designers working for major brands are using 3D printing for design. Many designers are expected to deliver 3D models as part an integral part of many campaigns. Students should learn how to translate the graphic design into a physical object by printing and iteratively modifying their designs. Because of the Adobe platform for 3D design, 3D designer is now a viable career option for students within the graphic design field. This is an industry that is exploding. Another important aspect of graphic design is package design. 3-D printing is becoming prevalent in

animation, creative prototyping as well as in character developments and prop design. Several competencies are already in the POS (program of study) for Commercial Art. For example our graphic design students are required to design a 3D package, specialty advertising as well as assorted promotional material, which is all part of many unique advertising campaigns they experience each year. Our commercial illustrators are required to do character developments and even build 3D characters later used in book design competencies. 3D fabrication makes designing all of this much more efficient and of a significant higher quality.

Additional Student Workstations:

The OAC believes the timelines of the life cycle of student workstations, established in previous program reviews, has been working very well. With the current enrollment however, the number of workstations is not sufficient to support the students attaining competency. To allow the maximum number of students to concurrently be on workstations, it is recommended that the number of student workstations be increased from the current 10 to 12. With the increased number of workstations, we would also require the same number of additional desks in both the primary and advanced lab. We advise the number of laptops also be increased by two for backup coverage for the main stations.

In reviewing the utilization of the current space, the OAC recognized that in its current layout there is no room for expansion. While maintaining the current footprint of the lab, and with minimal modifications, we believe reorganizing the space will allow it to better support the current numbers of students and allow for future growth.

Purchasing Timeline
In previous Commercial Art Program Reviews, the OAC developed a life cycle for the purchase of new equipment. A schedule was developed and previously agreed upon which implemented a cycle for the rotation of computer equipment. All new computer equipment begins in the Advanced Lab and then after two years rotates to the Primary Lab. From there appropriate systems are then utilized as download stations in the Photo Studio as well as equipment for TMS. The OAC hopes to continue all

previously implemented Life Cycles but proposes through the detailed Phases in the next section, to increase the purchase number from 10 to 12 computer systems.

Previously Approved Expenses
- Life Cycle of the Appropriate Design Software and related updates (currently Adobe Creative Suite but moving to the cloud)
- Life Cycle of 10 Computers Stations
    - Scheduled for replacement in 2017-2018 and then in 2019-2020
- Life Cycle of Instructor to Student Laptops
    - Scheduled for replacement in 2019-2020
- Life Cycle of MAC Server
    - Scheduled for replacement in 2017-2018

Phase I *School Year 2016-17*

3 Additional Adv. Computer Systems	$7500
3 Additional Adv. Work Desks	$2400
3 Additional Zuma Desk Chairs	$299
Large Roto Paper Trimmer	$400
4 Wacom Tablets	$2100
Additional 2 Student laptops with mice	$4000
Estimated Total	*$16,699*

Phase II   *School Year 2017-18*

3 Additional Primary Computer Desks $525

2 Additional Drafting Tables $389

1 Photo Monitoring Monitor & HDMI Cables –
(Mobile TV Stand for 37"-65" Flat Panel Screens) $160

Adjust 2 portrait Studios to ceiling mounted lights
Delta 1 Scissor Light Mover System for 3 Lights
& Rail Kits (3) $970

Cameras & Studio Lighting $1200

                                 Estimated Total   *$3,244*

Additional Phase II *School Year 2017-18*
   *(**Phase III** School Year 2018-19 **was added to Phase II** School Year 2017-18)*

*3D Fabricator $3900

*Vinyl Machine $700

                                 Estimated Total   *$4,600*

               Program Review Total   *$24,543*