

**DEPARTMENT REPORT
OF
PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT**

Department: Design Department

Program (Degree): Visual Communications (VIS)

Type of Degree: X AAS AA AS ATS AIS

Chairperson: Kyle Fisk (Acting Chair) Date: 5/18/2000

Person(s) Interviewed: Kyle Fisk (Acting Chair)

- I. **Program Curriculum:** A description of the basis for the program curriculum (i.e., how it is derived and validated). Include accreditation organizations, advisory committees or external groups that influence curriculum. Describe curriculum review activities including the review of course master syllabi.*

The needs of the industry are a major driving force that influences the curriculum and learning outcomes. Members of the VIS Advisory Committee provide significant input into the revision process. Advisory Committee members include representatives from education and industry, including: Art Directors, Designers, Instructors and other professionals.

Additionally, the portfolio review process (which includes a five-point checklist) has proven valuable in suggesting curriculum improvements.

The American Institute of Graphic Arts is the largest, most influential professional association for professionals in the industry. No major curriculum standards are generated from the Institute. The American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) provides standards for curriculum in the interior design option of VIS.

The master syllabi have been reviewed.

- II. **Program Learning Outcomes:** A description of what you intend for students to know (cognitive), think/feel (affective), or do (psychomotor), when they have completed your degree program. A suggested manageable number of outcomes should be in the range of five to ten. Describe Program Learning Outcomes review activities.*

The program learning outcomes have not been revised during the past year although major curriculum revisions are anticipated from the self-study and accreditation process underway.

Preparation for the accreditation visit by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) involves preparation of a self-study report including

information on course offerings, faculty and curriculum. This self-study will help to identify areas for further development.

An entry-level graduate with an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Visual Communications from Sinclair Community College will be able to:

Learning Outcomes	Related Courses
1. Recognize, understand and use the language and jargon of design.	All required VIS and PRT courses
2. Discuss the history, fundamentals and basic theories of design.	ART 101, 113, 161; VIS 100, M04, M05, 106, 107, 109; PRT 101, 106, 221
3. Apply critical thinking and creative problem solving skills to a variety of design problems.	All required VIS and PRT courses emphasized in VIS 101, 102, 103, 148, 206, 207, 236, 237
4. Communicate design concepts at various stages of development using the design process, drawing skills and/or appropriate software.	All required VIS courses emphasized in VIS 109, 206, 207, 236, 237
5. Develop print, animation and new media concepts using traditional and computer-based design tools.	VIS M04, M05, 115, 116, M42, M44, 148, 265; PRT 271, 272, M43 and M45
6. Develop professional quality presentations and demonstrate adequate written and oral communication skills.	VIS 101, 102, 103, 236, 237, 223, 278; COM 206; ENG 111, 112 or 113, 113 or 132
7. Demonstrate an understanding of the business fundamentals of visual communications.	VIS 100, 276, 278

An entry-level graduate with an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Visual Communications (Interior Design Option) from Sinclair Community College will be able to:

Learning Outcomes	Related Courses
1. Recognize, understand and use the language and jargon of interior design (ID).	All required IND courses

Learning Outcomes	Related Courses
2. Discuss the history, fundamentals and basic theories of ID.	ART 101, 102; ARC 101, 102, 116, 117 if taken; VIS M04, M05, 106, 107, 109; IND 131-134, 240
3. Apply critical thinking and creative problem solving skills to a variety of ID problems.	VIS 106, 107; IND 131-133, 231, 232, 233
4. Communicate design concepts at various stages of development using the design process, drawing skills and/or appropriate software.	All VIS, ARC, and DRT courses emphasized in ARC 101, 102, 240; VIS 109; IND 131-133, 231-233
5. Develop floor plans, interior views, and other relevant ID documents using traditional and computer-based design tools.	All required VIS, ARC and DRT courses; emphasized in ARC 101, 102; IND 131, 132, 133, 231, 232, 233
6. Develop professional quality presentations and demonstrate adequate written and oral communication skills.	IND 231, 232, 233; VIS 276; ENG 111, 112, 113 COM 206
7. Demonstrate an understanding of the business fundamentals of ID.	VIS 276; IND 233; MAN 105; MAR 201, 202, 225

III. **Assessment Method(s):** A measurable indicator of success in attaining the stated learning outcome(s). The methodology should be both reliable and valid. Please describe in detail.

- a. Formative Assessment Method(s) and Description: a measurable indicator of student in-progress success in attaining the stated learning outcome(s).

Each VIS major must submit a portfolio project at the conclusion of each VIS course. This technique provides students a means of demonstrating their grasp of the skills and knowledge covered in each course. Students are directed to save each portfolio project for review and possible inclusion in a “final” portfolio assembled at the conclusion of their program of study.

Faculty are currently discussing the possibility of conducting a first-year VIS assessment process to review student projects.

VIS majors are strongly encouraged to enroll in a VIS Internship experience or a co-op course during their course of study. Students can use the internship or co-op credit as VIS electives in the curriculum. Approximately 12-15% of VIS majors elect to enroll in an internship or co-op experience.

Faculty select VIS student projects for display in cases in Buildings 10 and 13. This provides a means of recognizing significant products and projects produced in the various VIS courses.

- b. **Summative Assessment Method(s) and Description:** a measurable indicator of end-of-program success in attaining the stated program learning outcome(s).

During the spring of each year an evening is set aside for employers to review the student portfolios described above. The event is called the "Spring Portfolio Review." Approximately forty area professionals (judges) are invited to participate in reviewing each of the student's portfolios. The event is conducted in Building 12. The judges are provided dinner during which the faculty review the evaluation process and explain the evaluation forms. A standard evaluation form, used by each judge, contains a five-point scale and a section for general comments.

The students display their portfolios via computers or through physical displays and interact with the judges. A minimum of two judges review each student's portfolio and provide immediate feedback to the students. A time limit is adhered to and at the conclusion of the evening all the evaluation forms are collected from the judges. The department tabulates a summary of the results. Students receive specific comments from the judges as well as individual summaries. Many of the VIS Advisory Committee members participate as judges. The input from the judges is not used in calculating the portfolio class grade. Students use the portfolio information for self-improvement. Members of the General Education Committee have been invited to participate in the portfolio review process Spring 2000.

- IV. Results:** A description of the actual results of overall student performance gathered from the summative assessment(s). (see III.b.)

Feedback received from employers of VIS graduates is very positive. SCC VIS graduates are sought out for employment. These results indicate that the overall program learning outcomes are being achieved at a very high level by VIS majors.

Multimedia is an area identified by employers that continues to require more emphasis in the curriculum. The VIS curriculum concentrates on digital video editing, 3d animation, web design, audio integration and multimedia authoring.

In response to previous employers concerns regarding 2-D and 3-D design principles, full and part-time faculty are working to establish a shared list of basic principles. This effort will standardize the language and improve course to course consistency.

Generally, VIS students are retained at a fairly high level. There are approximately 50-60 graduates per year. In addition, approximately 10-15 students complete the interior design option annually.

- V. Analysis/Actions:** From analysis of your summative assessment results, do you plan to or have you made any adjustments to your program learning outcomes, methodologies, curriculum, etc.? If yes, describe. If no, explain.

The infusion of the computer in the Graphic Arts Industry has created profound change in the profession and forced major changes in the Visual Communications Program. Ongoing assessment and revision of the curriculum is necessary to stay relevant.

The Design Department has added a number of certificates including: Multimedia, Digital Prepress, Offset printing, Desktop publishing, and Web authoring (with the CIS Department). The department has developed numerous modules in order to meet student learning needs more effectively.

The faculty have established "Critique Weeks" during the 3rd, 6th, 9th and 11th week of each quarter for all VIS classes. Attention to the basic principles of design is focused on through in-class critiques based on standardized assessment criteria. These sessions provide formative feedback to students throughout the term.

As mentioned previously a first-year portfolio assessment process is under review.

- VI. **General Education:** A description of where and how within the major the three primary general education outcomes* (communication, thinking, values/citizenship/community) are assessed.

The Capstone course in VIS incorporates non-profit service projects as an element of program completion. This project requires students to interview the client in order to understand project needs and expectations, discuss the project with a capstone advisor (faculty member), design a piece of work and deliver the finished project to the client. Two self-reflective papers address who the client is and the process and outcomes achieved for the client along with what the student gained through the experience. For example, a group of students recently completed a multimedia piece for the Allwood Audubon Center and Farm. This "service project" affords students the opportunity to complete an authentic task utilizing their specific skills learned in the VIS program along with more general educational skills of communication, thinking, and values, citizenship and community.

A "class captain" approach is used for the larger enrollment courses in the VIS department. The class captain, a full-time tenure track faculty member, leads other instructors in content coverage and course requirements. Class captains are able to recommend the use of various general education tools in order to enhance course consistency.

- a. Where within the major do you assess written communication? Describe the assessment method(s) used. Describe assessment results if available.

Written communication skills are reinforced throughout the curriculum through the use of portfolios. Some written papers and research skills are stressed in the first VIS course. Two papers are required and assessed in the capstone course. The writing checklist (short form) is used to assess students' written works.

- b. Where within the major do you assess oral communication? Describe the assessment method(s) used. Describe assessment results if available.

Oral presentations are required throughout the curriculum as students must present their projects to faculty, other students, and clients. The institution of Critique Weeks further solidifies this expectation. Effective interviewing skills are required in the capstone project. Oral presentations and critiques are required in student project presentations including the Spring Portfolio Review.

- c. Where within the major do you assess thinking? Thinking might include inventing new problems, seeing relationships and/or implications, respecting other approaches, demonstrating clarity and/or integrity, or recognizing assumptions. Describe the assessment method(s) used. Describe assessment results if available.

Both creative and critical thinking are stressed throughout each VIS course. Students are required to recognize assumptions, prioritize relationships, see implications, support choices, respect differences, and originate solutions. Critique Week reinforces these expectations weeks 3, 6, 9 and 11.

- d. Where within the major do you assess values/citizenship/community? These activities might include behaviors, perspective, awareness, responsibility, teamwork, ethical/professional standards, service learning or community participation. Describe the assessment method(s) used. Describe assessment results if available.

Values are touched upon in the context of individuals making responsible choices (global and environmental) related to the product composition through materials such as soy inks, recyclable products, and understanding what people read into symbols and how they are used, etc. Values are touched upon directly through some VIS courses and indirectly in others. The capstone project connects students with non-profit community agencies and encourages community awareness and good citizenship through service.

Ethics is touched upon with topics such as business ethics and legal issues regarding copyright.

- * Note: The oral communication checklist and the written communication checklist developed by the General Education Committee were adopted for college-wide use during the 1997-98 academic year by Academic Council. Thinking Guidelines developed by the General Education Committee are being piloted by faculty during the 1998-99 academic year.