

Attendees:

- Brian Bishop
- Constance Conklin
- Judi Berry
- Dave Haggadone
- Mary Speiser
- Jim Redding
- Sharon Wood
- Mike Reish
- Fred Clark
- Ellen Creal
- Ike Lea
- Ernie Block
- Madeline Townsend
- Christine Xiong
- Mike Verdusco (U of Detroit Mercy)
- Dennis Green (Fahrenheit Creative Group)
- Darryl Baird (UM Flint)
- David Baker (Ferris State Grand Rapids)
- Tim Whalen (Message Makers)
- Erin Lietz (Message Makers)
- Iain Bogle (Blohm Creative)
- Alicia Jacobs (student)
- Lisa Benck (student)

• Introductions and opening**ADM PROGRAM STRUCTURE**

• **Dave Haggadone:** Our department is comprised of four areas Art, Photo, DMAC and IT. We are looking to find ways to create collaboration between these programs so they can converge in new technologies. The question is, based upon your position, and what you see, and how you envision the future of ADM, what types of skills do you think that an individual graduating with this degree should have and what technologies do you see developing in these areas?

• **Brian Bishop** clarifies that our programs are two-year and our students graduate with a certain amount of credits, therefore limiting how much we can do. Tell us what we need to know and we can work around this.

• **Judi Berry** recently had the opportunity to visit extensive art programs at Kentucky Community Colleges, North Carolina, and EON. They are advanced in 3D technology. Don't know if that has hit the Midwest and should be integrated.

• **Dennis Green:** There is an umbrella that should be put on these subjects. Software is just taught. We are in the marketing and communication business. Whether you are designing for web or advertising you need to understand how the market works and that you are in the communication business. I have two former LCC students that work for me in our design department. We hire people that are great communications people.

Something to note is that this department looks like fun, but the people who make it are very intelligent. If you can't meet that substantially higher threshold of intelligence then you can't be an asset. A person has to already have a skill set and already be an artist to be successful in this area. You have to have the eye for design, and if you do, you will have a strong chance for success. If you don't have that walking in the door I can't make you an artist.

Students shouldn't get caught up in skill sets, but in creativity. What we look for is a creative mind. I see one person in Portfolio Day per year that even qualifies to apply for a position in their field. Creativity is the main thing to factor, and everything else should follow that.

Internships are a essential for that. You will learn more in an internship in two weeks than two years at school. If you understand CS3 and understand how to build web sites, you have to have that basic skill set of communications and artistic you are likely to be a successful person to work in the industry.

• **Mike Verduco:** Communication is a big factor. Visual communications. I realized this much more in the work world. Teaching the students how to learn and how to continuously learn. I was there when flash wasn't taught, but had to learn it once I was working. When I was here we did individual projects, everything in the work world is team-based. People tend to have their niche, getting people to rotate skill sets in team environment.

PORTFOLIO

What would excite you opening a portfolio?

• **Dennis Green:** Always looking for that one germ of a great idea. One of my former students here Dave Sunday, I hired him as an insecure kid who walked in with a portfolio of 15 things, but there was that one thing that I saw, and I said you have a chance to make it in this business, but you have to be able to do this everyday. Iain had more things, but you remember that one thing in the portfolio that is great, a sound piece of work. I'm looking for sound.

• **Iain Bogle:** I would agree. You are looking for sound thinking behind the design, not just the skills. You want to see the intelligence behind it, but also the passion from the people. Who are their influences, people who are passionate will know who their influences are. This is a key revealer.

• **Erin Lietz:** How someone would explain their portfolio is what reveals a lot about them. They could revise what you are looking at and that they could take the feedback.

- **Dennis Green:** The Portfolio class is critical and how they can explain what led them to each piece. Some of the people do this very well.

ARTISTIC INFLUENCES/ROLES IN THE BUSINESS

- **David Baker:** I'm sometimes shocked at students' ignorance of their times and references. We are always inheriting influences. Being able to stay engaged with the influence is so important. How little they know about film and visual metaphors. Students need to be changing their habits on where they are feeding intellectually. They should be able to have a conversation with someone of a previous generation and how ideas and movements were formed. For example, Photoshop and how it came to be in the 60s and 70s.

How are you doing this?

David Baker: We created a class where people look at where things came from. Students are asked to research an ad campaign and find out how it came to be. Teamwork is very important to teach in this field. Students need to understand what the process is for each of the players in a team. Each person has little bits to contribute. Working in a team allows them to really get a sense of who they are and how they fit in. It helps them to not just say I want to go into film, but I want to be X or Y. Advisors can help with this too.

Dennis Green: People don't even know what the jobs are in an advertising agency. One of the most important people in our agency manages the traffic flow of work. We have people who are working with a gun to our head all the time, but someone who isn't a designer who understands the business and is excited about working in the field and loves printing and managing the transactions there can do a lot. We need to stop training someone to be a web tech or photo tech but to understand the industry. One person brought up in a meeting the other day, we are all specific people here but we all wear a lot of hats, I do sketches, do copy, supervise, etc. Understanding all of the roles you may have to play is important. Understanding that you may have to do more.

Iain Bogle: In agencies that are small, you will not be able to be just a designer.

MARKETING CLASS

Constance Conklin: The specialist made the money when I came out of college. But now it is a generalist that does it. We have been having a dialogue about marketing. Artst 253 is a capstone for our program. Fulfilling a need, Dennis mentioned marketing.

Alicia Jacobs: haven't taken the class, but I like the art graphics field because it is so broad. It is important for a designer to understand the background of the entire field. People feel that the marketing class is geared too much toward

Business Program, though it is still important to learn. It would be beneficial to restructure the class to gear it more toward artists.

Tim Whalen: I took class briefly but realized how geared toward business it was. I took a similar class at UM Flint that was geared more toward history and advertising history. It started from the ground up. We went through local advertising campaigns, and it wasn't made specifically for art students but broadened the range of business students too. It was beneficial to business marketing too, for that skill set.

Dennis Green: When I came into the market the ad age was big, there was one page spread and who they are and what was their role in shaping the industry., That is missing today. I would go get all of those ad age issues and talk about how this guy influenced type and why he is considered a cornerstone of our industry for example. What you see what the history is what influenced you if that doesn't inspire you, you are in the wrong business. You have to be emotionally engaged and passionate.

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE INDUSTRY

Dave Haggadone: There is a fine line between emphasizing the skills and the cognitive development in a two year program. How can you emphasize that in such a short program?

Tim Whalen: When I was here someone was filling in for Susie in a graphic design class, we had a 4 hour class once a week, and the first half hour would be a mini history lesson. It was on how people used craft and started movements and how they worked with the industry as a group. It was enough to inspire you.

Iain Bogle: That would be useful and it might help some people to realize that maybe this isn't the right field for them. I remember back when I worked with someone who in the interview said the right things and presented himself well but didn't understand the field and lasted 3 days.

Dennis Green: The kid came in with great portfolio and I hired him on the spot. I gave him an easy assignment for a Meijer advertisement. I gave him the materials and told him to have at it. Nothing came at it. I pulled him into my office and talked to him about this, and he explained that he didn't think right when he came out of school he would be doing advertising right away. He left a note and all of his stuff was gone. I convinced him to try again and he came back for one day and walked out right away. He wasn't ready to start producing. Our business is for producing, we expect people to come in ready to produce.

Fred Clark: Weeding out is important at this institution. We work with people who walk in the door. I would like to see admission standards.

Iain Bogle: I don't think people should be rejected from coming here.

Constance Conklin: To a certain extent students will weed themselves out.

Dennis Green: There are people in the portfolio shows that have no business being in this industry. They can't speak, can't draw, and they're not photographers. The bottom line is that you are going to get some of that. You have to give those people a chance. You have to take people who have a 4-year degree and want to develop a skill that they have an interest in. You've got to give the few kids that actually can cut it a chance to do it. Other people should be able to learn from the leaders in the class.

Constance Conklin: By seeing the people who can do better, the other students will discover that they are other-abled.

Darryl Baird: We see people like that at UM Flint, but we tell them not what to do rather what to say in what they do. The conceptual part is that they think. If they make it with the conceptual part, it will just come. We tell them that they have to know about the concept.

Mott students are being told what to do and execute projects very well. When we give them just the tools without the concept they get stressed and are not comfortable with that.

Mike Verduco: Some people go into this and think I am going to make art. There is a fine line between commercial art and fine art. Dissecting the media and knowing how things break down is so important. I see people who don't realize that a web page breaks down into images and text, and there is typography involved. Breaking things apart and being able to put them back together is what it's about. You can do the fine arts in your spare time, but you need to produce.

David Baker: Community College people need to be useful in a print shop. Community colleges are great for learning skills and the new software. People who work somewhere can come there and learn more. People with a four-year degree need to come back to refresh what they know.

Constance Conklin: I see a lot of people like that.

David Baker: It is really important to key in on those skills for people who already have the basics. The other people are the people right out of high school who don't have the direction yet. Those people need to learn the foundational skills and know how things like typography make sense. They should have the concept of what they want to do in life and the art history foundations. Some of my best students are LCC grads because they come in with the passion and are on the right track. They need to find that passion and get the skill set.

Fred Clark: How do we light that fire?

David Baker: The instructors need to help find the leaders in the class and develop the creative environment. I like to create environments where students get excited about what they are learning. People bring in ideas. I have had so many kids who look at grandma over there and say 'What does she know', but she is the one that comes back with great compositions. And ,other, younger students are overtaken by the technology and their million photos.

Constance Conklin: It is about inspiration and then passion develops.

Lisa Benck: The professors here are so diverse. Susie and Connie have such different perspectives. And you get such a different energy from the classes.

Tim Whalen: I came out of a class where we had a project with a tight time frame and it felt like a real world project to finish this entire advertising campaign. It was pushed a little early though. We really had to produce. People got frustrated and there were only a handful of people who made it.

Constance Conklin: That is what we are struggling with.

FINE ARTS/DRAWING CLASSES

Darryl Baird: We have a question: when do we stop using fine art to supplement drawing. Drawing for Design I is a lot like our design classes. Being able to draw very quickly, you can go towards storyboards and otherwise. Is that something that you can add to what you have or create something?

Brian Bishop: We do have something new that is like that.

David Baker: I drag my kids through Drawing when they say they can't draw. They literally work on their assignments right before class. It is really epidemic and pandemic, they absolutely refuse to draw because of computers. Those same kids having trouble in Drawing do fine in Photoshop. They think they can get by stealing from the web. Drawing is a CRITICAL skill that you need in your work.

Sharon Wood: We have a lot of drawing classes that are called something different. Is that helpful?

David Baker: Yes. That's part of it. You are showing them the reason they should draw and storyboard.

Constance Conklin: It's part of the process. It leads to the passion and what you are growing.

Dennis Green: Drawing things out is part of your development. You look at it for real and you know you hate it and you can change it.

Mike Verduco: It's part of the process and especially important when working with a team. You take the concept out of your head and work with others to really develop it.

Dennis Green: We've gotten to see this on every logo project, we've seen people pluck all these things off the web and all the logos looked the same. Give me postage size sketches of things that you could do. And we'll see what has potential. My first idea is OK, the next three are bad, and then they blossom into ideas. The creative part of the idea is the business.

Sharon Wood: I just had a class where they had to make 4 sketches. And they assumed that I would just pick one. I just said I like this part of this that part of that and I want you to put them all together.

Darryl Baird: That's what a client would do.

Sharon Wood: Exactly.

Jim Redding: That's the problem with the students; they don't want to do the sketches. They want to do it all on the computer. They don't want to make the sketches by hand; they would rather spend even more time creating the ideas in Illustrator or Photoshop. The worst are the ones who make the sketches after the project is finished.

David Baker: I'm on a board at KVCC and the students have to be there on time and spend the first five minutes sketching. That is their proof of being there on time.

Fred Clark: Most high schools don't teach art any more, it's just a place to stick the dummies, troublemakers we can deal with, if we could come up with a plan or a course for students who have not had drawing or despise the notion of putting a pencil on a paper, what would we get? If we put in a new class we have to take another out. We have had to take out our Advanced Drawing. Let's talk about what we can do at the beginning to give these kids a jump-start.

Brian Bishop: Foundations. Do we even bother with fine arts and painting any more?

BREAK

Tim Whalen: Another idea about well-rounding and film, I feel like, I went through video and cinema, and having those skills putting them into the skill set helps. Just breaking things into thirds, like a TV ad, is so helpful.

Brian Bishop: I would like to go back to what we were talking about in foundational skills. We had a nice discussion on drawing. What are the skills that you expect or would like to see of our graduates when they leave here? Drawing,

design, color, etc... We have talked about the personal skills, where do we need to be?

David Baker: My best seniors have a great understanding of drawing and it makes a great designer.

Iain Bogle: Drawing to thumbnail is really practical. We normally will be contracting specialists and illustrators to complete this part of the project, but in reality people need to understand it to the degree of why are they using it for their project and the breadth of the styles available. And I think LCC already does a nice job of the vital element of the specific skill and the software skill, the idea to think critically and the idealistic view and how it fits overall in a marketing theme. And all of this is what creates a good employee for us. We just expect someone to come in with the knowledge of what marketing is and that it is part of what they will be doing. And we expect them to know what to do to print their work and how to put together a web site.

David Baker: Most students need to know typography and good design, not necessarily all of graphic design.

Darryl Baird: In our program we teach them to understand the letter forms and we just start with drawing. We will introduce a program like InDesign, and then something like Illustrator.

Iain Bogle: I read something about Steve Jobs and how typography was the beginning of his understanding of design and how important it is to Apple. He basically just dropped in on typography classes in college and was so intrigued by them.

Darryl Baird: I learned something about our Theater Department about how they create a very accurate marker drawing to show how a stage should be set up. Markers are after pencil, after pen and when do we get there? It is a very different style and idea. And how do you instill in a student what is the minimal amount that you can use to get the idea across. And to reduce it to the least amount of elements that can still communicate that. The photography students seem to be the ones that resent Drawing the most going in but admit that they get so much out of it.

Fred Clark: Students seemed to get a lot out of a class on visual literacy that was basically trying to connect students into our visual culture. And so a lot was that it was taught by our art historians, and there were a lot of images, and they were looking for clues in the image to see how it relates to something else. An example is a couple of champagne flutes with the initials J and B. Just getting students to gather visual cues on the entire image can do a lot for their work.

David Baker: Something in our dept that I love and hate is the drive toward drawing tablets. It's good and bad. And we have to be careful that we don't infuse

that the hardware or the software will make you better, but it is really about the story or the communication.

Iain Bogle: It is really about the idea. Especially in this day in age it is really to break through. Skill is still needed, but you need it in combination with the ability to provide the idea and communicate it.

COLOR

Brian Bishop: Something we need to talk about is color. We only have one Color Theory class. How much do we need to know?

Mike Verduco: We have talked about drawing, but color is really a foundational skill, whether is it web or print. It is really one of those basic building blocks. You have to have something along those lines. Students coming out of LCC are going to be competing with journalism students who have taken one design class, but going into an interview they need to be able to communicate how they are better than this journalism person and be able to back it up with courses they've taken and work they've done.

Darryl Baird: I think that color is important. We have to get into when we introduce RGB and CMYK and Pantone. We have an introductory class and the issue is when do we introduce it. What is taught there in Color should be expanded on in other class so that they can see the application to it. But color should be a part of the web class, the print class, and everything else.

Constance Conklin: About the marketing thing. I need to know what I should do to modify what there should be in the Graphic Design courses. I am comfortable teaching creative marketing but not a general marketing class.

David Baker: They need to know their position in the pipeline, to be good marketers they need one class. To teach it in graphic design they need to be the creators.

Iain Bogle: Do you ever have that you will introduce a guest speaker or that you will use a video?

Constance Conklin: The marketing class is diluted in that.

Fred Clark: I've always had the impression that the art students get to make everything look good. It's sort of the web students in the Portfolio who get to do all the work on the web page.

Darryl Baird: He was talking about marketing not being applicable because it is in the Business Department. But looking at whom the audience is matters. We encourage our students to take electives in the Communication Department, then use that skill and translate it into their art and design skill set. Just thinking

about what would your grandma want to see, really thinking about understanding the audience and getting out of your comfort zone. Thinking about illustration, photo and color.

Iain Bogle: That is really one of our basic things for judging a piece. We want it to influence or create a reaction in a particular way whether it is to buy a product or make a donation. It is really a tool, Graphic Design. Looking at the marketing.

Ike Lea: Looking at the campaign tools this election of how they sold a candidate. McCain's was very military and Obama's was very new and young. It was very evident, their age difference and their approaches to selling themselves.

PORTFOLIO

Jim Redding: Question about portfolios: We try to generate a good portfolio. Dennis talked about that one piece that knocks your socks off. Do you look for a piece that would sell something or just the passion in the design?

Iain Bogle: From my perspective, what I look for is that raw intelligence and the consideration of what type face that they use and the target for who their audience is. That's what we look for. After they are with us a couple of years we want someone that needs very little adjustment. The adjustment people are what you expect during their first two years. I would rather see less really great pieces than be overwhelmed by 12-15 ok pieces.

Darryl Baird: The other side of the portfolio is that if that's all you see (if it is mailed in or submitted), you only get the sense of the solution, but with the presentation you get the sense of what the problem was and how they solved it. There's something about the presentations.

Iain Bogle: I would rather see before and afters, and how they solved that. Then you really get to see how they are at solving the problem.

Mike Verducco: Pick your best pieces but explain your processes. I teach an architecture portfolio class. We want to see what methodology, techniques, approach were used. Process says a lot about what you do. I was one of the first two to graduate from the program here in Web Design/Multimedia, something that I walked away with was the PROCESS and that is important. Really with any kind of art there is a process. It's getting through the process by the deadline. Students need to get through it and get through it efficiently.

Jim Redding: How about thumbnails?

Iain Bogle: That's part of it too. Really seeing how they thought of it and how they solved it. Design solution contained in a logo.

Constance Conklin: We do that in a back pocket of a portfolio.

Jim Redding: Even in a drop off thing just a facing page with a few little idea sketches.

Iain Bogle: Ultimately, you will need to be able to intelligently talk about your process. That's what you get paid for is that they have a problem and you will need to produce a result.

Mike Verduco: If it is really a drop off, and you will need to do that. A URL becomes an efficient way to get your work out. The one with the explanation of the process, I am more likely to contact that person.

Darryl Baird: Just getting things out into people's hands is important. Even if it means producing books of your work at \$20 a pop it is important to get that out into people's hands. You have the digital, the physical, and the explanation. They will all be needed.

Iain Bogle: I prefer experiencing something online and seeing people's web design.

Fred Clark: We have a class where people will write a proposal for something that they will work on for the semester and write out the target market and so on. Hopefully they will get a nice portfolio piece. What should they get out of it? What should I be looking at and what sorts of resources should they see? They should understand the process of creating multimedia web animation products. I want them to create a book of their materials, writings, sketches, because that is how you keep track and that is how you get paid. It's a class that is informal enough that we can put a lot in there and change things around. If there are elements that we should put in there, what should we be doing?

David Baker: I think you are doing all of the right steps. I think that the process with all of the little steps is great. And you are working with the process, just cleaning up the process and presenting it well is important.

Fred Clark: I would like to put more lecture into the class. One of the ideas is having conference calls to people in the business. Would anyone be interested to take a conference call to benefit our students?

Iain Bogle: I would. I know that's important.

Fred Clark: They would ask you on the call, what do you want to see? How much do you pay? Are there benefits? etc...

Mike Verduco: Is there a process model that you provide them with?

Fred Clark: They start with storyboards and then turn that into an animatic, then animate from that.

Constance Conklin: Do the process books then belong in their portfolio?

Fred Clark: Yes. I can tell you from my students that they would not keep them along if we didn't make them. For a web designer they should have flow charts and storyboards.

Iain Bogle: I want to see them researching others and what Dennis was saying is important is knowing these people, these icons, just knowing these processes looking at what is available on the web. I have learned a lot this way myself. There is a lot to be learned in how people produce.

Darryl Baird: How magazine and Communication Arts magazine really touch that.

Fred Clark: I don't see students enough exposed to that.

THE FUTURE OF PRINT, WEB, PHOTO, VIDEO

Jim Redding: What do you feel about the fate of the future? Will print be dead and will it all shift to web?

Iain Bogle: Print won't die. TV didn't kill radio. It will shift more to electronic and online. From our perspective people are moving from TV ads to online ads. We are producing more online than on TV now.

Jim Redding: What about web design?

Iain Bogle: We are getting more into CMS design for us

Mike Verduco: Web design and media design is evolving. I do think that print is dying and this is especially relevant in photographs, people don't print them anymore, they are content with keeping them on their computers.

Iain Bogle: There is more of a convergence. People still appreciate good design regardless of the medium. Getting it right it doesn't matter what medium.

Brian Bishop: With the convergence, would it be best to offer one track that separates at the end or to keep the programs separate?

Sharon Wood: We use a lot of back-end in our web design, and that is what's different in graphic design.

FRONT-END AND BACK-END DESIGN

Iain Bogle: We discover there is a different between the front-end and the back-end. We do all the front-end where I work and someone else does the back-end, but we are still expected to be able to communicate with the back-end people.

Mike Verduco: I was hired to do front-end because I know back-end. It is good to be a generalist but it is important to have your part too and something that differentiates you.

Iain Bogle: we also have a person that does back-end but our front-end person should be able to talk intelligently about it too.

Mike Verduco: I left here not knowing back-end, but learned it out of necessity.

Darryl Baird: Learning more is a necessity because companies need to be able to talk to those people, they need a mediator. That's what student needs. Students need to go through all of it: Java, PHP, everything. We don't require it but we need it. The pool of students narrows the further you get.

Iain Bogle: Knowing front-end you still need to have the knowledge of what is back-end and how it fits in.

Fred Clark: We have a Web Program that is pretty much all back-end, and we have Mike's Web Program that is all of that, and then we have Dreamweaver courses that do all front-end. Students ask why do we need 3 web design courses, why don't we just take one? There is a continuation there and they all complete the puzzle. It allows students to fit themselves into that continuum of that convergence. A lot of what we hear about convergence is producing a student that can't work in either field because they know a little of this and a little of that. Is it viable to put together photo, and multimedia, and web?

Iain Bogle: Yes, definitely. How there is, was, and will be what the industry is doing and how it changes and how you can have a course that is so cutting-edge on what is getting invented and goes along with that.

Constance Conklin: In our Graphic Design course, we talk about technologies that don't exist and Sharon is doing a great job with this. But we get different students who have a 4-year degree or are just out of HS, and we get people who are going to succeed not matter what and others who will just function at the lowest level.

Iain Bogle: And it's what Mike was saying about people who just learn to learn and how they come out so much more ahead.

Brian Bishop: Is there anything you want to tell us?

FILM AND VIDEO

Darryl Baird: FILM. Film is really an industry that is up-and-coming and we can't stop it. I have people who come in and talk about it and I can't understand what they say.

Mike Verduco: I think film and video and photos are really coming. And interactive video is coming and it is coming quick and it isn't just instructional film but all of it.

Iain Bogle: And as far as content it is going to be substantial.

Darryl Baird: Detroit has always been a film home, and it's changed but it is still growing fast.

Iain Bogle: Red film has come about and that quality is so great.

Darryl Baird: There are a lot of camera crews and film crew coming here and now the DMS are literally handling the hard data. So it's even the people experiencing film are learning and there is a lot of room for the younger people to come in.

Mike Verduco: There is a lot of room for story telling.

Darryl Baird: Photo isn't dead. It's really coming out

Constance Conklin: Our DMAC program has really evolved and the film industry is coming to Michigan.

Iain Bogle: We have started doing online video and putting it on web. Locally TechSmith produces usability software here and they are great. They are dedicated to raising the level locally of IT talent.

Fred Clark: Is there an organization with people like you that we should be involved with?

Iain Bogle/David Baker: MCAI, IT council, Ad council, AIGA

• **Closing and Thank you**