

Observations and Comments on Leadership, Personnel and Operation of the **Graphic Design Program**

Each Graphic Design Department or Program operates somewhat differently according to the type of institution, mix of personalities, program objectives and working conditions. During my career, I have taught at independent schools of art, private and public universities. What is relayed here are recommendations based on my experiences, observations and opinions. While they might not apply to every program, it is hoped that they will provide insight into a number of conditions and situations connected to the operation of an educational program in Graphic Design.

Program Organization

The traditional form of Graphic Design program organization is a Department with a Head who is expected to provide leadership, handle administrative duties and represent faculty, students and program. In most institutions the position is by appointment, at others, the headship is elected from the faculty or it is a rotating position.

Liberal Arts colleges and most but not all state universities are prone to use other forms of organization. Perhaps the most common is to lump Graphic Design with

other disciplines into a Department or School of Art under the leadership and supervision of a Department Head or Director. In these circumstances, there is no leadership by discipline; there are less faculty for each program of study and each one tends to be less professional with fewer required credits in the major.

Graphic Design programs *must* have a designated Head with specified responsibilities to fulfill the role of leadership. I cannot conceive of a program being effective without institutionally defined leadership.

Role of a Department or Program Head

The position of Department Head, Senior Professor or any other such designation defining leadership is generally regarded as one of authority. Speaking from twenty years experience, I would define the position as first being one of service. Service to the administration, faculty members and students. The role of the Head is to serve the various and many needs of faculty, students and administration. A primary responsibility for the Head is making decisions which are in the best interests of the program. The decisions might not be popular with administration,

Class work by
a student of Rob Roy Kelly



all faculty members or students. The Head must make the decision and accept full responsibility for it even when it is difficult.

The position of Department or Program Head is the least understood of any in academic organization. Administrators tend to view the position as the last outpost of administration and expect Department Heads to represent administrative interests. My view of the Department or Program Head position is that its primary role is to represent the best interests of the program, faculty and students, and it is the link with administration.

Within academic organization, I divide individuals into categories of leaders, managers, followers and independents. The latter might fit into any of the previous categories or function in different ones at different times. I do not believe that one category is superior to any of the others because all are required. Qualities of leadership usually are natural and might be roughly characterized as being forth right, respected by others, easily accepts or creates change and has abilities to organize and project.

I do believe that individuals can learn the role of leadership. Those with natural abilities to manage might exhibit traits of paying attention to details, are more methodical, have a strong sense of responsibility and order. In my experience, followers are usually individuals who do not want the additional responsibilities of the Headship or managerial duties as they are committed to professional practice, their families or some other outside interest.

My observation is that administration most often goes awry when unsuitable individuals are appointed to a position, and particularly so when leadership is required. Managers seldom make good leaders; leaders are invariably boat-rockers in management positions and so on. However, there are many exceptions and sound appointments result from matching the appointment to the needs of the position. As an example, a Graphic Design program with an exceptionally strong faculty might benefit more from good management than strong leadership.

The leader who carries out the responsibilities and serves their constituents will be more successful over a longer period of time than those who view the position as one of authority. Leadership simply does not work when it is only authoritative. The Head consults, coordinates and facilitates program matters, keeps records, plans and generates ideas, works with administration and speaks for the program.

Effective traits of leadership are few and absolute. Leadership is defined as one who leads by example. An effective leader cannot expect others to do what they are not willing to do themselves. Being direct and honest are mandatory in dealing with faculty members, students and administrators. There has to be trust and respect. Procrastination, indecisiveness or avoidance behavior on the part of the Head inevitably leads to erosion of confidence in, respect for, and trust of leadership. Openness and flexibility are related qualities; to listen is often more important to leadership than an ability to articulate. Secretiveness does not sit well with faculty or students and it is highly destructive to trust. A leader can make some unilateral decisions and survive in position. However, if the leader consistently makes unilateral decisions, faculty resent it and credibility for leadership is lost.

The Head must be loyal and supportive to faculty members and students. It is extremely important that the Head encourage, acknowledge and compliment faculty members and students on every appropriate occasion. It is only weak leadership that seeks to elevate themselves. They are the ones who most often attempt to lead by authority of position, and they seldom have the respect of either students or faculty members.

Equally so, faculty must be supportive of leadership, and if they are not, then there should be new leadership. It is important that faculty be unified to successfully deal with administration and competition with other departments or programs within the college or institution.

One of the more important qualities that separates the Head from most faculty members is an ability to overview the entire program, to plan and project it several years into the future—to identify goals and deal with change. Many teachers are interested only in their field of expertise or courses. Any program that is not in some degree of flux each year is

going to eventually stagnate. The responsibility of the Head goes beyond relying on faculty recommendations for change, improving the program or formulating new curricula. It is critical for the Head to generate ideas or goals which are brought to the faculty, preferably in writing, for discussion and decision. There may be occasions where it is necessary for a Head to overrule faculty members or make a decision without consultation. Knowing when to consult or on what occasions to act independently is perhaps one of the more difficult aspects of the position. Leadership can make better decisions if they follow the rule of doing what is in the *common good*.



***“If you do not respect a person,
you cannot effectively work with them.”***

It is essential that the Head have on-going formal and informal communications with faculty members individually and collectively. Regularly scheduled staff meetings are almost mandatory. The Head does not have to be personally proficient in every aspect of the program, but the Head must know what is required for an effective educational program. It is the responsibility of the Head to recruit the mix of faculty that collectively make the Graphic Design program well balanced and comprehensive with high standards.

An important function of the Head is guidance and development of young teachers and new instructors. This usually means spending time counseling them about teaching, values, objectives and passing on experience. Young teachers tend to be enthusiastic but naive, and in their enthusiasm, they may go astray in the classroom. The Head might discuss and advise on course problems before they are presented to students or attend critiques. It is extremely important that young or new teachers feel a part of the faculty and that they are included in all aspects of program operations.

The Head must be able to be firm with administrators, faculty and students when it is necessary. There is always room for negotiation but there also is a point where further adjustment is destructive. In instances where students should be dropped from the program, when faculty members are out of line or should not be supported for RPT, the Head must deal with these problems promptly, directly and firmly. The Head must be principled, and willing to accept the consequences of adhering to principles. To not do so is to risk losing the respect of those whom they respect.

Teachers

What may be a serious flaw in education currently is the tendency for upper administrators to judge the ability to teach on the basis of individual accomplishments and student evaluations. This might include how many awards, exhibits, books or articles a person has done; it might be related to reputation based on the quality of personal work or particular commissions that have been highly publicized, or some other similar criteria. Student evaluation of teachers is relied upon much too heavily by administrators.

Student evaluations of teachers are based more on likes and dislikes than being a true reflection of teaching ability. Students simply do not have the perspective to make an accurate assessment of teaching. Because of the pressure by administration for high teaching scores, and because student evaluations play such an important part in retention, promotion or tenure, teachers may be corrupted into being more concerned about student evaluations than teaching. In this instance, student evaluation of teaching becomes counterproductive to its intent. Peer evaluation (within the program) and an administrative evaluation should have equal weight with student evaluations.

A better gauge of teaching abilities for me is the effectiveness of the individual to communicate with students, to have and teach worthy values, to be demanding of student performance, to be a good role model and to respect and work with colleagues in the program for the common good of students.

If the objective of education is student learning, it stands to reason that criteria for evaluating teachers, individually and collectively, should be based on student performance in school and growth after graduation. It is my observation that faculty as an instructional team dealing with the entire Graphic Design program is more germane to quality of student education than to individual teacher accomplishments in the studio, academia or profession. Sometimes this includes faculty members who might not be particularly articulate but who have devised other means for communicating with students. There are teachers who are dedicated to education but have weak records in research or professional accomplishment. If their contribution to the over all program warrants it, the Department or Program Head along with other faculty members are obliged to aggressively support these teachers during review or tenure time. It is best to educate administration and the appropriate committees as to the value and importance of these individuals before the fact rather than during or after the fact.

The quality of a Graphic Design program lies in the cohesiveness of the entire faculty based on common goals, values and mutual respect. This does not imply leadership surrounded by clones. Ideally, there should be some balance of personalities, expertise, interests and teaching styles. The key ingredient within the instructional team is respect for one another. Faculty members do not have to agree on everything or even like one another, but there must be mutual respect.

One divisive faculty member can be devastating to an entire program, students and other faculty members. It has been my experience that when teachers are reluctant to participate fully in the review process or fail to interact with other faculty members, there is a serious personnel problem. It is also evident that there are going to be additional problems in the future such as a split in faculty, undermining of colleagues or program, and division among students. One person expressed their reason for not participating as, "I don't want other teachers commenting on work done in my classes, so I don't talk about work done in their classes." Whatever the reasons, it invariably reflects insecurity. The irony of the situation is, that within my experience, almost every one of these individuals was an excellent teacher with abilities and expertise that the

rest of us could never match. The reason why individuals choose to be divisive is difficult to comprehend because it is so destructive. Usually it is attributable to some combination of jealousy, insecurity, ambition, fear, competition or ego. However, when this situation develops, it should be dealt with directly and firmly as it is so pertinent to the overall good of program, students and faculty.

Indications of a Destructive Teacher

- Tend to isolate themselves from Department or Program Head and other faculty members.
- Begin to build a personal following among students, sometimes with other faculty members.
- Acting unilaterally in terms of going to administration to discuss program matters or faculty members.
- Failure to cooperate with others in the department or program.
- Undercutting the Department or Program Head or other faculty members.
- They are either contentious or refuse to participate in staff meetings or reviews.

Dissident faculty members are a serious problem and must be dealt with promptly once their actions are identified. A first step for the Department or Program Head is usually a consultation with the individual to discuss the problem and try to find out why this behavior is happening and resolve it. If this is not successful, address a memo to the individual describing the situation and copy to the Dean or President or other appropriate offices. If the problem persists, arrange a meeting with the individual, Department Head or Director and Dean or President to discuss the matter.

If none of the previous approaches to the problem of a dissident faculty member have worked, there is one other avenue which is extreme but it might be the only solution. If the problem is so devastating as to be advantageous to give up a faculty line rather than continue, go the Dean

or President and request that the individual in question be transferred to a position outside the program. Contrary to the understanding of many faculty members, tenure does not guarantee assignment to a specific program or duty. Tenure only assures an individual of a position within the organization. Based on my own experience at several schools, the program, students, institution and myself would have benefited from taking such action.

Teacher Vested Interests

Revitalization of Visual Art education programs in state universities begins with restoration of teachers' *vested interests*. Vested interests are defined as teachers' perception of being instrumental in making the program what it is; a good program with high standards that is a source of pride. Individually and collectively, teachers feel it is *their* program. With a proprietary attitude, teachers assume greater responsibility. They are more likely to be productive and involved with curriculum and students. Faculty members with vested interests are usually strong proponents of educational integrity. Keys to vested interests are *self-determination in program matters* and *resources*.

How much salary teachers receive is seldom a factor in establishing a sense of vested interest. However, working relationships with administrators have a profound effect on commitment. Administrative support, recognition and encouragement can do much to reinforce teachers' vested interests. Far too often teachers who have vested interests are penalized and eventually driven out of institutions by administrators. Committed teachers want to improve the program and persistently press for changes and additional resources. Unenlightened administrators view such teachers as *boat-rockers*, *trouble makers*, or as *uncooperative team players*. By so doing, institutions alienate teachers they need, and retain those with less dedication to educating students. The present system often appears to reward teachers who do not fulfill their professional responsibilities but are willing to defer to administrators on educational matters.

A teacher going into a multi-purpose classroom has less incentive to care about the condition of that space. A teacher using centralized shops lacks personal concern regarding maintenance or use of equipment. If a teacher is locked into curriculum content, policies or procedures established by someone else, there is little motivation to consider what changes would improve the situation. If resources do not exist for making the program better, what purpose is there in thinking about how it could be improved? Under these conditions, teaching becomes only a job and teachers' interests usually are diverted into outside activities or personal work.

Teachers require reasonable control over assigned space, how it is used and maintained. To develop facilities and enrich the program, operating budgets need to be realistic and consistently allocated from year to year. Teachers should be able to establish priorities within the budget and act without undue process or delay. Teachers want to see improvement from year to year, or vested interests will eventually diminish. Teachers need greater flexibility to make changes in their program and its operation, have more control within their area of responsibility, and be able to rely on adequate resources. Teachers want meaningful input into all aspects of *their* program.

Programs, or groupings of related programs, require leadership and most state university Art Departments operate as a homogeneous whole, composed of eight to fifteen separate programs of study under the leadership of a single Department Head, Director or Dean. This scarcely provides the leadership that nurtures vested interests among faculty members within individual programs.

During the period of retrenchment beginning in the late 1960s and extending to the present, there has been a steady erosion of faculty commitment to teaching. The growth of administration has led to over-management resulting in even more bureaucratic layers. Since faculty status has been downgraded from *professionals working under contract* to *employees working on salary*, there is less self-determination in educational and operational matters. Educational leadership by program has often been destroyed. Institutional resources have been diffused to areas other than instruction with a corresponding reduction of operating

funds at the program level. All of these factors contribute to poor environment and conditions for teachers. Consequently, there has been a decline of educational quality. Currently there is considerable disillusionment among seasoned faculty. Cynicism is often expressed as, *This is just a job, do as little as you have to, get as much as you can, and put time and energy into your own interests and work.*

Hiring New Faculty

In hiring new faculty, the requirements of the position will dictate to a large extent how and where to find applicants. If the person is to be used at the introductory level, it is wise to select someone from a strong pedagogical background or someone who has an established record teaching at the beginning level. Too often, administration stresses the need to hire someone with a professional reputation, especially a Head. It is assumed that anyone successful in the profession will be equally successful in teaching. This is often a false presumption. If a person is needed to teach at the Senior level, finding a person with good work experience and having values consistent with program objectives is a logical choice. Frequently there are professionals who welcome a change of career and they have valuable experience to pass on to students. Looking for someone with special expertise such as typography, letterform, computers, or photography is equally suggestive of where to look. Programs with outstanding reputations in specialized fields are also good sources.

Some programs rely on graduates of their own program as teachers. I have done this myself on several occasions and there are advantages. Graduates are familiar with the curriculum and program, they are a known quantity and their adjustment is relatively smooth and quick. Yale has relied on hiring graduates more than any other program within the scope of my experience, and they have been reasonably successful with this practice. However, there can be distinct disadvantages to the practice of hiring graduates, but it is best to avoid this practice except under unusual circumstances.

Graduates must have meaningful experiences between graduation and the time they return such as graduate school, professional employment or teaching experience at other institutions. No matter how talented the person, it invariably is a mistake to hire a graduate to teach in the same program without intermediate experiences.

I have found that running ads in journals advertising an open position is the most wasteful and unproductive procedure for hiring a new instructor. Equal Opportunity Employment regulations force this practice on every program seeking new faculty. My position on Equal Opportunity Employment requirements is that my first responsibility is to the students. At the same time, I am sympathetic to the objectives of affirmative action for women, minorities and veterans, but I will not recommend them in place of a more qualified candidate. I know of situations where upper administrators have mandated to search committees that a recommended candidate must be a Black or Hispanic female and no other recommendations will be accepted. This is wrong. It twists the intent of affirmative action, it sends the wrong message to search committees and it can have serious impact on the quality of instruction. I have never hired a new faculty member as the result of an ad.

What has worked best for me is to identify someone I know who is teaching or someone a faculty member knows, whose work and teaching effectiveness are established. These individuals are contacted to determine their interest in moving, and if so, they are encouraged to make application. Another approach is to contact those people in teaching and professional practice whom I respect, and ask them for recommendations. These individuals are contacted to find out if there is interest in teaching, if so, they are requested to make application. If there is no success with the first two procedures, I look for Graphic Design programs that in my opinion are outstanding and call the Head for recommendation of recent graduates who might be interested in teaching.

Sound programs in Graphic Design are generally built on a strong pedagogical base with a structured curriculum. Graduates from this type of background make the best teachers in my opinion because they understand theory, sequence, standards and they are effective teachers.

Management

There are many talented designers who have succeeded in practice that came from weak educational backgrounds. These individuals tend to operate on an intuitive basis and they experience difficulty verbalizing about design or articulating criticism of student work. No matter how talented, the intuitive designer usually does not function well at the introductory level, but they might contribute at advanced levels.

One of the least tapped sources for Graphic Design teachers and program leadership is women. This is even more important today because most Graphic Design programs enroll fifty to seventy percent female students. Yet, there are still far too many all male Graphic Design faculties. In recent years, more women have been hired as teachers, but there are still too few women as Department or Program Heads.

Hiring minority representatives is a much more complex problem. The pool of highly qualified minority designers is small, and they are usually more interested in professional practice because of the difference in remuneration between working and teaching. There is no question but what minority teachers are valuable and in demand today because of the numbers of minority students.

Whenever a minority student performs well, understands the program and has all the qualities to be a successful teacher, I always discuss with them the good they could do in education. My thought is that an internship program in teaching for qualified minority graduates with potential and interest in education would move more of them into teaching. The principal consideration is the quality of program chosen for internship and the length of time spent as an intern.

What I look for first in a candidate is their values – what is important about design to them? What do they stress in evaluation of students? Education is built on value judgments from grading to criticism of student work.

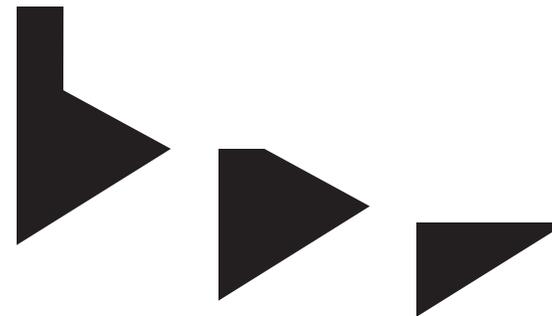
I have never been interested in *prima donnas* as they usually are a divisive element in the faculty and have difficulties working with colleagues. Faculty members working together is extremely important to the success of the program and learning experience for students. Maturity or sense of responsibility, dedication to education and students are equally desirable qualities in a teacher.

Staffing for Graphic Design

Graphic Design is a multidisciplinary program and requires a number of instructors with a variety of expertise. Teachers must cover both theoretical and professional studies; this may demand experience in basic design, letterform, drawing, color, systems, communication, typography, photography and computer graphics. There are technical requirements in photographic processes, video or film, typesetting, printing production and computer-aided design. The educational requirements for a credible program in Graphic Design entails four to six faculty members for a program with approximately one hundred students. Even smaller programs require at least four teachers because of the range of course content.

There is a tendency in many institutions to over rely on part-time instructors and this seldom works to the best interests of students. If the program is located in or adjacent to a major professional community where recognized professionals can be brought in to teach, it can be beneficial for students at advanced levels. However, many programs are in outlying areas where the pool for part-time teachers is small or the quality of professionals is not consistent with educational objectives. The balance between tenured, tenure track, contract and part-time teachers should be a serious concern.

There are far too many Graphic Design programs at state universities advertising a program as being professional that is woefully understaffed. There is no excuse for this happening with such regularity. If the university represents itself as having a professional program in Graphic Design, then it has the responsibility to provide adequate staffing and other resources.



Professional Advisory Board

I first began advocating a Professional Advisory Board at the Kansas City Art Institute during the sixties. It was in the 1980s at Arizona State University that we finally were able to establish a professional board of advisors.

My plan was to sign at least one member with a national or international reputation and the others to be designers who work at a high level in the profession. We could afford a board of three. Two were ongoing members and the third position rotated.

My strategy was to bring the advisors in several times a year to meet with students and faculty, critique projects, lecture or possibly give a project. The principal use of the Advisory Board was at the end of the Spring semester when the entire board would assemble at the school. At the year-end finale, I would also invite the president of the local professional organization to participate. We would install an exhibit of student work from the entire year. Students would meet in the morning with the board without faculty presence to discuss the work and program. The board would meet with faculty during the afternoon to discuss the work and curriculum. I wanted to schedule lunch for the Department Head and Dean with the board where they could pass on their recommendations and observations regarding the Graphic Design program.

Having a good Professional Advisory Board adds status and credibility to the program. It is good for faculty morale and provides excellent role models for students. It is also useful in recruiting when you can show that caliber of professional input into the program. The board can convey to the Department Head and Dean an outside viewpoint which often has more weight with administrators than when the same message comes from the faculty. The board was also helpful for both faculty and students in making professional contacts.

Our board consisted of Jim Cross of Cross and Associates in Los Angeles, Steve Holler, Director of Visual Communications for Raychem Corporation in San Francisco, Jerry Herring of Herring Design in Houston and Carl Miller, Graphic Designer at IBM in San Jose.

After considerable effort, we were able to put through an Adjunct Professor appointment (without remuneration) for Jim Cross and he offered to teach a Senior seminar. We were unable to get credit for the seminar, and students really did not know the status of Jim Cross in the professional community so they were unaware of the opportunity available to them. Consequently, their attendance was not regular and productivity was erratic at best. My guess is that the experience was not particularly rewarding for Jim Cross.

The other two members of the board came in once or twice a semester to critique problems, lecture or meet with faculty. I was never able to arrange lunch as our administrators always said they were too busy. The Department Head never met with any of our board members. This was a disappointing experience but I think the concept was good and I would do it all over again.

Students

A minority of students select a school on the basis of program quality or choose a program that fits their interests. Most students will base their application on what they can afford or what is convenient. Sometimes they will apply only to schools they have heard about, a teacher or friend has recommended the school, or someone they know attended that institution. The reasons for picking an institution are often superficial to educational goals. There is an assumption by most students that one degree in Graphic Design is as good as another, and it is of little consequence which school they attend. This is a dangerous presumption in any form of professional education.

Over the years I have interviewed with countless students, and sometimes parents, about what school they should attend. My impression is that most of them are vulnerable and they are like sheep going to be fleeced. They do not know what questions to ask, and what they want to hear from me is that our program is the best one in the country.

Management

Questions prospective students or their parents should ask

- 1 *Is enrollment in Graphic Design limited to a specific number each year?*
If enrollment is not limited, it is likely that there are more majors than can be accommodated at one time and there will be competition to enroll in required classes. This may result in a student having to spend one to three extra years getting a BFA degree because of not being able to enroll in required courses because they are full.
- 2 *How many credits are required in Graphic Design for a BFA?*
Any number of credits less than thirty-two to forty is going to be insufficient preparation for a career in Graphic Design. Ideally, there should be forty to fifty credits in the major.
- 3 *How many Graphic Design instructors?*
Any less than four instructors means there is going to be a limited curriculum and that the program is inadequately staffed. A program with less than eighty majors can be effective with three instructors. An ideal teacher/student ratio should be about 1:15. There should be inquiry as to how many instructors are part-time and there should be a reasonable balance between full-time and part-time teachers.
- 4 *Are majors taught separately from elective students?*
If majors and elective students are taught together, it reduces the class intensity and the educational experience for majors will be less.
- 5 *How many Graphic Design Majors in the program?*
Are majors determined by student declaration or faculty acceptance? Any number greater than one hundred and fifteen means that courses are taught in more than two sections. If different teachers are instructing in different sections of the same course, there will be considerable inconsistencies which compound as students progress through the program. The overall educational experience will probably be less.

- 6 *Do advanced students have fixed workspace?*
Seniors require fixed workspace, and it is best if Juniors can also have designated workstations. The availability of fixed workspace contributes to the learning environment and is a significant factor in student motivation and interaction.
- 7 *What technical facilities are available and under what conditions?*
Graphic Design majors require unrestricted access to computers, xerographic and photographic facilities. Computer literacy is a mandatory requirement for employment following graduation.

If students are planning a career in Graphic Design and the program cannot meet or come close to the requirements for an effective education, they should not enroll!

If students are enrolled in a Graphic Design program and do not have adequate space or technical facilities; if there are insufficient credits in the major, if the program is understaffed or leadership is not working – they should complain! If the institution offers Graphic Design, they are obliged to provide a reasonable educational program. Complaints should be taken to upper administration. Teachers and Department Heads usually cannot make the necessary changes. The Provost and President are the appropriate offices to approach. The complaints should be documented in writing and restricted to fundamental issues. Complaints are most effective when done by a committee of students rather than individuals. Students should be firm and persistent, they are paying tuition and have the right to demand an adequate education.

Selecting Students for the Program

When admission to the program is limited to a fixed number of students, it is perplexing to know how best to make the selection. Every faculty wants the best students but identifying them is extremely difficult. I have worked with portfolios and interviews, tests, and open admissions. In addition, I know of programs that accept students based entirely on SAT scores.

Personal interviews have most often led me astray. The student may come across as articulate, committed and having promise of being an ideal student. Once in the program there were often problems with attendance, productivity, attitude or the ability to handle design process.

One problem with portfolios is that you never know how much of the work is the student's or their teachers. An aspect of portfolios that I did find fairly reliable was an indication of commitment. My favorite is a crow-quill drawing about fifteen by twenty-four inches. I don't care about the subject material or whether it is a good drawing. I know what it takes in time and effort to fill that space with a crow-quill pen. This is a clear message that the student is willing to work, sustain effort and that the work is rewarding to them. Any piece of work that requires intensive effort and requires an extended length of time to complete usually reflects the desired qualities in a student. I prefer seeing drawings to collages, paintings or conceptual art.

At Arizona State University, we used a modified version of a visual test devised by Robert Swinehart at Carnegie Mellon University. The test had sections on line drawing, concept, color, visual and verbal directions and design orientation. The student could submit five pieces of work of their choice with the test. The test was made available in the Spring semester and applicants came to my office, signed in and were given the test. I marked on the sign-up sheet those students who were handicapped or minorities so we would have this information when we scored the tests. We were accepting a maximum of forty-four students each year. The tests were collected and on a Saturday the entire faculty went through all the materials and scored the tests. We used a four point scoring system so that we could also figure in Grade Point Average. The thirty-five to thirty-eight highest scores were automatically accepted. We then reviewed handicapped, minority and those students who had applied the previous year and been rejected. After considerable review and discussion, the faculty chose the final students to fill the quota. The names of the accepted students were posted. This was a very objective process for selecting students, but we did not seem to have any better students than if we'd used other procedures. Perhaps a lottery is next.

Management

The best method for selecting students is similar to that used at Basel where they have what amounts to a one year admissions process. They select a fixed number of students from applicants who then enter into a one-year admissions process. The students take basic courses for one year, and on the basis of work and progress, a fixed number of them are admitted into the program. I have worked with an open admissions for the first year and then weaned out those students who seemed uncommitted or unsuited for the program. This process worked best. A Sophomore Review where students are accepted by faculty recommendation to advance into the Junior program accomplishes the same purpose. However, it leaves only two years for professional education.

Another method that might work is to have beginning students in the Department take a general Foundations the first semester, and elect either a Design or Fine Arts emphasis in the second semester. Graphic Designs students could be selected based on performance in the second semester. This also permits Graphic Design to add one semester to the program.

It was always our policy to require transfer students to take our entire program regardless of what level they reached at another institution. Any accumulation of design credits were applied to elective requirements.

Student Records

In every program with which I have been involved, there has been a fairly high rate of attrition. Usually the largest number of students withdrew or were dropped in the Sophomore level; four to six as Juniors and two or three as Seniors. Overall, there would be a forty to fifty percent attrition rate for the total program.

At The Minneapolis School of Art, I soon encountered problems with failed students or their parents. Other than grades, justification for failing students came down to the teacher's word against that of the student, and for me, this was an untenable situation.

My response was to develop a form which accommodated all the Graphic Design courses and teachers. Each course had a separate space for a grade and teacher comments. The student's name, date and grade level were also recorded. At reviews, the forms were filled out, and they were kept in alphabetical sequence in a loose-leaf notebook. As the student moved through the program, the forms accumulated. The notebook moved from one teacher to the next as students moved ahead. Each new teacher could review the student's progress to that point with all the previous teacher's comments. In dealing with either students or parents regarding grades or being dropped from the program, the records were invaluable and certainly eased our previous problems with justifying faculty action. The records were also helpful in supplying information for job references after students graduated.

Over the years, the forms were further refined. We eventually made a separate form for mid-term reviews. The procedure we most often followed was to have the students stack the work on their desk during the scheduled class-time including a sheet of paper with their name on it. The students were not present when the teacher went through the work. The instructor wrote comments and gave a tentative grade for each student. These were copied with one copy left with the student's work and the other put into the record book. Keeping these records did mean extra work for teachers but it kept students informed, and generally, the procedure was well worth the effort.

Student Work Records

At student semester reviews, faculty pulled the best of student work to make record slides. This practice is extremely important as the slides can be used as teaching aids, for recruitment or lectures at other institutions or presentations in the community. We used the slides to keep administrators abreast of what was happening in the program or as credentials in soliciting funding for community or research projects. The slides were important in curricula planning as the faculty could lay out slides representing work for the entire year on a large light table. We could see where we needed to put more emphasis, inject new course content or change sequence. Student work records are an invaluable asset for any program. It is also good to keep an updated file on faculty work.

Graphic Design Alumni Records

At The Minneapolis School of Art and The Kansas City Art Institute, I kept alumni records and lost track of only three students over a twenty year period. We started to keep alumni records at Arizona State University but my tenure there was too short to be effective. My experience has been that alumni records are of immense value to the ongoing program. Alumni proved to be the most effective means for placing students after graduation.

Alumni were scattered over the entire country and with a phone call, you could obtain information regarding hiring in that area. Or, graduates working for firms that were hiring would call me to say there were jobs available. Every two years we published the list of alumni and mailed it out to them. Most would stay in contact with the program because they wanted each new listing. Graduates who wanted to work in a particular location would look in the alumni listing to find if any previous graduate was working there. If so, they could call them, make inquiry, or contact them when they arrived to look for work. Often it was a place to sleep even though a davenport while they were interviewing. As many students had found their first job through this avenue, they were always willing to help a new graduate.

In time, alumni were working in a variety of design capacities throughout the country, and frequently we brought them back to the school to talk to students. Alumni have a credibility with students that makes these visits worthwhile.

We passed out alumni forms to each Senior prior to graduation. The key question on the form was to list a phone number for parents or a relative that would always know where they were located.

Even though every institution has an alumni office, it is best done within the program. It is important that any records done within the department are passed on to the institutional alumni office. They are always pleased with the assistance and are cooperative when you need something from their office. I usually had a work-grant student each year who kept the records updated.

At Arizona State University, we published a newsletter in conjunction with the alumni program. The newsletter was not only an added incentive for alumni to stay in contact, but it was also an excellent promotional tool both within and outside the university. We used it for recruitment and promotional purposes. On a larger scale, I think it would be excellent if all Graphic Design programs could publish a newsletter once a year as a means of better knowing what is going on at all the different institutions.

Course Scheduling

During the early 1960s, the Graphic Design program at The Minneapolis School of Art was in its formative stages. New faculty and courses were being added each year. At the same time, the school was in the throes of making the transition from a non-accredited to an accredited institution. Any changes in program had to go through a Curriculum Committee rather than just the Director. The committee was composed mainly of Fine Arts personnel and they were not altogether pleased with the expansion of the Graphic Design program. At least once or twice each year, I would go before the Curriculum Committee to request changes or additions in the credits or curricula of Graphic Design. The committee was becoming increasingly annoyed with the constant changes, and each new proposal became more difficult to get approved.

In desperation, and with fingers crossed, I went before the committee with the proposal that we have only one listing for Graphic Design for each semester of the three years. Nine credit courses in the Sophomore year, twelve credit courses in the Junior year and Senior year. If the Curriculum Committee would approve this proposal, there would be no need for Graphic Design to come before the committee again. They approved it.

With a large block of credits each semester, the faculty divided the hours into separate courses. The significance of this was that students failing any class within the block failed the entire course. This pressured students to put effort into all their classes and not concentrate on just

those they favored. This arrangement gave us maximum flexibility in using the time. We could teach one subject a shorter length of time and teach another course the balance of the semester. We could extend or contract time allocation within a class depending on student progress. We could team-teach or combine classes without complications. Student evaluation was done through review by the entire faculty. In order that individual faculty integrity could be maintained, it was agreed that any one faculty member could fail the student. This option was exercised only two or three times over a twenty year period, and then with the concurrence of other faculty members.

Alvin Lustig had once commented that teachers often complained about the inability of students to grasp the interrelationships between the different areas of design, but the educational system itself pigeon-holed different subjects with separate classes, grades and teachers. Our experience with block scheduling with one grade for several courses did help students to better understand interrelationships. It helped us to be more effective in evaluating students as we could point out qualities in one area that were not applied to another. We could better identify weaknesses and strengths in student work and it brought the faculty closer together as a team. This is the most productive scheduling system in my experience. We also used the same block schedules at The Kansas City Art Institute and it worked equally as well. Even though the block system of scheduling is sound and works, it is difficult to implement at most schools and nearly impossible at state institutions.

At state schools, a variation of this practice was to set aside one day of a class meeting three times a week to teach a mini-course in another subject. For some lectures or courses it was possible to use the last hour of one class period to do the same. This strategy is particularly useful at state universities where it is time-consuming and difficult to add new courses to the curriculum. At state institutions, it is perhaps quicker and easier to extend hours and credits in an existing course than to put a new one in the catalogue. The extended classes can then be broken down into two or more courses. My experience has been that it takes two to five years to add a new course to the curriculum in state schools.

Management

Most private institutions do not repeat courses each semester. Practically every state school repeats introductory level courses each term. This practice is inefficient, costly and creates additional problems for students in sequencing their classes. Graphic Design teachers should insist on restricting entry level classes to Fall semester only. This permits new courses without additional funds, space or staff.

Restricting entry to Fall semester encourages students to stay in sequence because to drop out for a semester means that they have to wait an entire year to get back into sequence. The result is that students tend to stay together as a group throughout the program. My experience has been that students moving through the program as a group are more secure, productive, competitive and the learning environment is vastly improved. Students that stay together know each other and the interaction leads to more learning from one another.

A very few Graphic Design programs in both public and private institutions accept majors in the first year. Because first year foundations programs are so weak at most institutions, Graphic Design must teach foundations within their own program reducing the number of professional courses that can be taught within the time frame between entry and graduation. Taking students in the first year provides Graphic Design students a much improved educational opportunity to prepare for a career within the four years. Teaching Graphic Design basic courses in the first year allows faculty to establish discipline, pertinent content, build good work habits and reinforce student commitment. Under the present practice of requiring a first year general foundations, Graphic Design faculty usually have to devote time to helping students unlearn bad habits and values; and reshaping student attitudes during the first year of the Graphic Design program.

The best institutional scheduling that I encountered was at the Kansas City Art Institute. All studio courses throughout the school were scheduled from 8–11 AM and 2–5 PM. All academics were taught five days a week between 11 AM and 2 PM. On Thursdays, all students left their department to take a one day elective course. I found this scheduling to work extremely well.

Student Grading

Perhaps the most difficult and demanding procedure in the program was student grading, which was done by review. At the end of each semester we held individual student reviews with the entire faculty present. Each student was given a space to exhibit their work and fifteen to thirty minutes to discuss it with faculty members. At the conclusion of the review, the student received their grade.

If students felt the grade unfair, faculty went over the work piece by piece and explained the basis for the grade. Time was also spent counseling students and making suggestions on how work or work habits could be improved. Without a doubt, the review process for establishing grades was extremely fair and beneficial for students. (The review process is described in detail in *Students and Teachers: Attitudes, Evaluation and Records.*)

Use of Space and Technical Facilities

Having sufficient dedicated space and how it is used is germane to an effective Graphic Design educational program. Problems connected with the amount of space dedicated to Graphic Design are most common to state university programs which have a liberal arts focus. Within the liberal arts context, most instructional space is multi-purpose shared by several disciplines. Rarely are students in these institutions provided with dedicated work space. In my experience, it is essential that Seniors have a workstation that is accessible to them twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week. There are considerable advantages if Juniors can have the same arrangement. Fixed space is not that important for Sophomores.

There are tangible benefits if the space allocated to Graphic Design is contiguous. The principal advantage is that students at one level can see and learn from what students at other levels are doing.

Especially so in state universities, not only is most space multi-purpose, but it is scattered around campus which tends to destroy unity of the Graphic Design educational program. Additionally, the quality of available space is frequently inferior as universities are prone to assign space to art programs that no other departments will use. Art Departments are often the last occupants of buildings before they are condemned or torn down.

At most large universities, students often feel like transients as the classes are scattered over a large area in many different buildings with unfamiliar classmates in most courses outside of Graphic Design. Dedicated space and fixed workstations create a home base which give students a feeling of security and belonging. As such, students tend to be more comfortable and productive. How much space and how it is used impacts strongly on the quality of student educational experience.

My experience with fixed workspace clearly reveals that it has much to do with student work habits. Students with dedicated work space devote much greater time to class work than those without. Additionally, the educational experience is enhanced by the interaction of students using a dedicated space. It is also necessary that students have access on an extended basis to technical workshops essential to meeting course requirements. Somewhat related to this is the need for a place to keep the various tools and materials required for classes. A locker is not comparable to a fixed workstation in this respect.

When we had extensive photo and printing facilities, our experience was that if students maintained the facilities rather than janitors, we had better working conditions and less theft. At both Minneapolis and Kansas City, when it was clear that faculty members were leaving, thefts increased dramatically. This included large equipment. At Minneapolis someone stole an enlarger and at Kansas City it was dry mount press, lenses, etc.

We cleaned our technical workshops twice a week; once by Sophomores and Juniors and the other by Seniors. Students divided into those who emptied trash, those who checked and oiled equipment and those who scrubbed the floors. It worked very well.

Ever since the 1950s when Graphic Design was identified as something more than illustration and advertising, there have been requirements related to technical workshops. Graphic Design at all types of educational institutions have experienced difficulties being funded adequately in respect to equipment, maintenance and updating of technical facilities or operating supplies. Again, the problems have been greater at state universities and other schools with a liberal arts focus. The tendency at these institutions has been to provide only centralized technical facilities. It is absolutely essential that Graphic Design have some dedicated technical facilities restricted to the sole use of Graphic Design students. Having central labs is helpful for periods of heavy use such as the end of semesters or problem deadlines, but by itself, central labs are unsatisfactory. Central labs serving a variety of disciplines must compromise in terms of what equipment and how it is used. Each discipline has specialized requirements. This factor is even more important today with the use of computers in design.

Design Workshops and Internship Programs

A few Graphic Design programs in private schools and many in public universities have a Design Center or Workshop. These shops are staffed with only the best advanced students who are overseen by a faculty member. They do work for non-profit organizations in the community and a substantial amount of work is done for clients within the university. The Workshop usually is located in a restricted space allocated only for that function, and there is a greater concentration of equipment than found in the program at large. The Workshop charges clients a small amount in addition to expenses. This results in a separate operating budget for the Workshop which may be used without many of the normal university restrictions. Additionally, the Workshop provides the better students with meaningful experience in production and dealing with clients. Students like the prospect of having printed work for their portfolios. They are anxious to get into the program and most work hard once they are there.

Management

It has been my observation that many Workshops are a direct outgrowth of faculty frustration, usually that of the Program Head. Faced with a student mix of electives and majors, insufficient credits for majors, low operating budgets plus the intransigence of university bureaucracy, a Workshop is established as a separate educational experience where the teacher can control the quality of education. Most workshops are a source of great pride by the teacher and students.

Because of the independent source of funds, even though not substantial, what there is goes directly into improving the educational environment for students. The purchase of equipment, subscribing to professional publications, establishing a design library housed in the program area, field trips, bringing in professionals to lecture, promotional materials for the workshop and other similar uses for Workshop profits greatly enhance the learning environment for students.

Most Workshops provide fixed workstations for the students, and many times these are the only students in the entire program that have dedicated workspace. Because of the fixed space, students tend to be in the Workshop evenings and weekends. The relationship among students in the Workshop is close, and there is more interaction than found among students at large. There is a true sense of comraderie. The degree of motivation to learn is usually much higher in the Workshop than in the program.

Ideally, most of the qualities associated with the Workshop are those that would be desirable within the program as a whole. What Workshops clearly demonstrate is that the reason for educational programs being less than they could be is more university policies and bureaucracy than teachers! Workshops are a classic example of how teachers develop an area of vested interests within an educational environment where it is impossible to accomplish the same vested interests within the program. The factors making the difference are fixed workspace, selected students with control of budget and program. Administrators wishing to improve the quality of educational programs in their institutions should take heed.

Internship programs are well worthwhile, and especially so for those Graphic Design programs in outlying areas. However, the quality of the internships is far more important than the number. Too often, internships are indiscriminately established and interns are little more than cheap labor in small studios of dubious quality. The purpose of the internship program is to provide practical experience for selected students in a professional environment. The internship is expected to be a learning situation. Therefore, it is essential to select only those firms that will provide a good learning experience with proper role models. Students should be involved in a level of practice that is consistent with their educational goals.

We selected internships throughout the country and rarely had more than one local internship. At various times we had internships in Los Angeles, Chicago, New York City, Denver, Atlanta, Pittsburgh, and for several years, Amsterdam, Holland. Being in an outlying area, it was important to expose our interns to new environments. The experience of adapting to an unfamiliar locale was nearly as important as the work experience.

We implemented our internship program during the summer months between the Junior and Senior years. This allowed interns to come back into the program for a year where they could share the internship experience with their peers. In the Spring, we posted our internships for the summer and Junior students applied. A faculty committee reviewed the applications and selected two or three applicants for each position. The selected students sent their letter of application and slides to the firm. The sponsor made the final appointment.

If you have good internship positions, it is in the best interests of the program to have the internships repeated year after year. This entails being very selective regarding which students apply. After several years of working with a sponsor, their preferences about interns become evident, and you strive to match the intern with the firm. This results in students generally having a better work experience and sponsors feeling positive about the program. The companies providing good internships are cultivated throughout the year as you would treat a good friend.

We kept in contact with sponsors throughout the year establishing strong personal ties with the firm. We followed up each internship with forms regarding student qualifications, how interns performed and asking for suggestions or comments about the internship program. Sometimes the sponsor would visit the school and make a presentation to the Junior class to illustrate and answer questions about their firm.

Within my experience, the Junior year is often the most difficult for students. If students are going to have doubts about Graphic Design as a career, it usually surfaces near the end of the Junior year. There have been numerous occasions where excellent students have experienced doubts about their abilities, or their commitment to Graphic Design. Whenever it was possible to put these students into an internship situation, it nearly always resolved these doubts, and the student returned with a positive view about themselves and their education.

Graphic Design and Fine Arts

Graphic Design and Fine Arts programs co-exist as departments or disciplines within the school or college, and invariably, they impact on one another. Within a historical context, Fine Art programs were the first to be introduced into universities, and they were the dominant program at most regional art schools.

During the past twenty years, Graphic Design students have equaled or out-numbered Fine Art students. However, Fine Art faculty and concerns are frequently the dominant influence in shaping graduation requirements and operational policies in visual art programs. This is particularly so at state universities.

Graphic Design seldom has program staffing comparable to that assigned to Fine Arts. The number of one to three faculty members assigned to Graphic Design at state universities is testimony to this factor. The same has been true with allocation of studio space, especially that which is dedicated exclusively to Graphic Design. Because of less faculty, the influence of Graphic Design in shaping curriculum and graduation requirements for its students has been severely limited. Even today in universities, Graphic Design students are required to take

numerous Fine Art courses and credits in the major are less than required for professional education. The first year general foundations program is completely dominated by Fine Arts.

Since the period of student activism during the late 1960s, Fine Arts and Graphic Design educational practices and goals have been in a state of growing divergence. Fine Arts has moved toward expression and the making of art rather than instruction in visual art with a corresponding breakdown of studio disciplines. Graphic Design has moved toward professional education and increasing emphasis on pedagogy and technical education. As a consequence, many Graphic Design programs now incorporate a number of courses that traditionally they relied on Fine Arts to teach. Drawing is perhaps the most notable of these courses.

Because of the shift of student population from Fine Art to Graphic Design, there is considerable insecurity among Fine Art faculty members that if Fine Art courses do not remain required for Graphic Design students, there will be a shift of faculty lines from Fine Arts to Graphic Design with a decline in the influence of Fine Arts in shaping policies and requirements for graduation.

Fine Arts engenders an enormous amount of personal ego which makes cooperative effort between divergent programs difficult. It also is often expressed as contempt for Graphic Design as being *commercial* while Fine Arts are directed toward a more noble pursuit of art for its own sake.

Against this background, Graphic Design programs have struggled for years with varying degrees of success. My strategy was to identify Fine Art faculty members that I could respect and made a special effort to cultivate a relationship with them. I would discuss our needs with them socially, and encourage them in matters that were beneficial for students and Fine Arts. For instance, a young drawing teacher who emphasized fundamentals. When important department, curriculum, tenure or other such meetings were scheduled, I would consult with these individuals before hand to make as strong a case as possible for those things I felt to be essential for Graphic Design.

Management