TRIPTYCH:
Perspectives on the formulation and effectiveness of a college design curriculum

Presented by

3 Kelly Monico
Visiting Assistant Professor
Metropolitan State College of Denver
on behalf of Lisa M. Abendroth,
Associate Professor
Metropolitan State College of Denver

2 Bryana Sylvester
Current MSCD
Communication Design student

1 Elysia Syriac
Designer, Liquid Inc.
MSCD Communication Design alumna
A fully accredited, four-year institution, Metropolitan State College of Denver serves more than 21,000 students. Metro State consistently educates more in-state undergraduates than any other state institution and now has the second-largest undergraduate student population in Colorado.

One of the largest public baccalaureate colleges in the country, Metro State boasts more than 57,000 alumni, 90 percent of whom stay in Colorado after graduation putting their education to work as teachers, business owners, pilots, scientists, nurses and more, as well as entering our state’s and other fine graduate schools to study medicine, law and other disciplines requiring advanced degrees. In addition, an estimated 265,000 Coloradans have taken classes at Metro State for career advancement and personal enrichment.
The NASAD accredited Art Department offers the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Art in ten studio concentrations:

Art Education
Ceramics
**Communication Design**
Digital Art
Drawing
Jewelry Design and Metalsmithing
Painting
Photography
Printmaking
Sculpture

In addition, there is a Bachelor of Arts in Art with a concentration in Art History, Theory and Criticism, and a licensure program in K-12 Art Education. Minors are offered in Studio Art, Art History, and, in cooperation with the Departments of Technical Communications and Communication Arts and Sciences, Digital Media.
The art major prepares students to function in a variety of artistic roles. The major enables students to decipher and interpret the nonverbal language of art and design, develop responses to visual phenomena, organize perceptions, and conceptualize both rationally and intuitively. During the course of study, students will develop competence in a number of art and design techniques. They will become familiar with major achievements in the history of art and demonstrate the ways in which art reflects cultural values. The program goal is for every major to comprehend and evaluate contemporary thinking about art and design and to make valid assessments about quality in art and design works.
FOUNDATION REQUIREMENTS
COMMUNICATION DESIGN CONCENTRATION

ART 1101-3 Two Dimensional Design
ART 1141-3 Drawing I
ART 1501-3 Three Dimensional Design
ART 1531-3 Introduction to Digital Art and Design
ARTH 1600-3 World Art I: Art Before 1200
ARTH 1700-3 World Art II: Art Since 1200
Communication Design Curriculum

Art Foundation = 18 hours

Communication Design Concentration = 48 hours

Art Electives = 12 hours

General Studies = 36 hours
Communication Design Curriculum

Communication Design Concentration = 48 hours

Color Theory and Practice
Visual Thinking
Typography I, II, III
Photography or Illustration
Art of the 20th & 21st Centuries
Design Research Methods
Identity & Systems Design
Narrative Design
History of Communication Design
Understanding Visual Language
Concepts in Motion
Art History, Theory & Criticism
Communication Design Internship
Communication Design Senior Experience: Thesis
The Communication Design program will challenge the student to become an informed “thinking designer.”

The Communication Design student will be provoked to:

1. explore the theoretical and practical aspects of design,
2. create inventive and effective design solutions that address specific problems within a social context
3. examine and gain an understanding of the potential relationships between form and function
4. examine the relevance of semantics, pragmatics and syntactics
5. work with audiences and communities affected by the design need
Design history has shown the circularity within the generalist / specialist question. At MSCD, a design education situated within an Art Department at an urban liberal arts state college, a broadly defined yet highly focused personalized experienced typifies our approach.
TRIPTYCH:

Bryana Sylvester

21 years old

Anticipating graduating with a Bachelors of Fine Art degree with a Marketing Minor in December of 2007 from Metropolitan State College of Denver

Concentration in Communication Design
Educational Overview

Communication Design Major

1. Typography
   - Visual Thinking
   - Constructing the Digital Image

2. Typography II
   - Illustration for Communication Designers
   - Color Theory and Practice
   - Narrative Design

3. Identity and Systems Design
   - History of Communication Design
   - Communication Design Internship

4. Typography III
   - Concepts in Motion

5. Communication Design Senior Experience Portfolio Development

Marketing Minor

- Managerial Communications
- Principles of Marketing
- Consumer Behavior
- Semantics
- Direct Marketing Management
- Marketing Research
- Event Marketing
- Cultural Influences on Communication
- Seminar in Marketing Management
As a designer and a marketing student it is vital to my education that I stay on top of economic, political, and social factors of the local community to the international community. It is important to know the newest trends, software updates, and changes in the field. Textbooks lay the foundation of knowledge, beyond that is up to me to stay in touch with the profession and what is happening right now and what is being anticipated as happening next.
I think of my involvement within the design world as concentric rings.

I am the core (this is my education)

College Community
- AIGA Student Chapter

Denver Community
- AIGA Colorado
- Bridging the gap between students and professionals

National Community
- AIGA Design Conference, 2005
  - Schools of Thoughts 3, 2007
- AIGA Next Conference, 2007

International Community
- Substance Exhibition (Curator Assistant)
Every year there are thousands of students who graduate with a degree in design.

As a student about to graduate myself I have established tools that I use outside of the classroom environment to make my degree stand out from the rest. Our education is the foundation but it is up to the individual student to build off of that by creating relationships with other students and professionals in the field.

I have taken my education and made it stronger by translating the assignments, readings, and due dates into my perception of the future of design. My education at MSCD has guided me to that soon to be graduation date but it is up to me to take it into the field because if I don’t go out and find it someone else will.
TRIPTYCH:

Elysia Syriac

Designer, Liquid inc

Graduated with a Bachelors of Fine Art degree in 2005 from Metropolitan State College of Denver

Concentration in Communication Design
Graduating designers are expected to be generalist specialists. Having efficient skills in many areas.
Metropolitan State College of Denver provided a liberal arts education that helped inform my eventual design career.
Networking and a constant drive to become a great designer help students in the transition from college to a career.
“The real issue is not talent as an independent element, but talent in relationship to will, desire, and persistence. Talent without these things vanishes and even modest talent with those characteristics grows.”

Milton Glaser
Designers must know how to design for interactive and print mediums.
“I am always doing that which I cannot do, in order that I may learn how to do it.”

Pablo Picasso
Metro provides the tools for motivated students to be great designers.
MSCD’s curriculum is specifically structured within an array design courses that evolve within an ever-changing cultural context.
Thank You