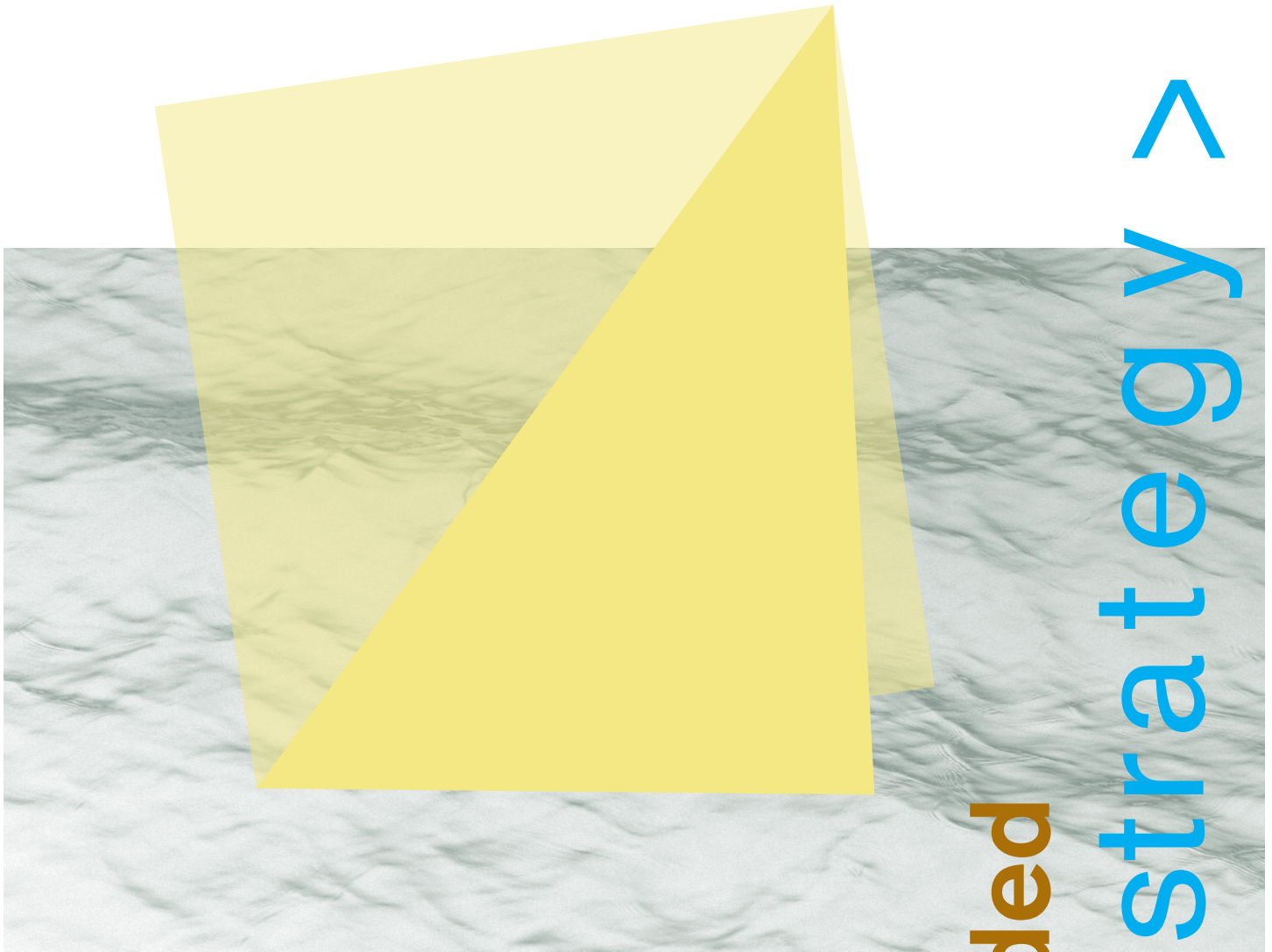


futureforward

foundational ideas, curriculum and continuous improvement

volume 4, number 1 : march 2015

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Integrative Teaching International (ITI) is an advocate for progressive educational models and policies that support an environment of integrative teaching experiences across disciplines. ITI's goal is to define trans-disciplinary partnerships required in higher education in a new millennium between knowledge, creativity, and learning. ITI's mission is to provide experienced educators with a forum for exploration, elaboration, and improvement of existing skills through new areas of collaboration and research.

ThinkTank a subsidiary program of Integrative Teaching International promotes inquiry-based learning in an art+design multi-disciplinary setting through a series of workshops and conferences around the world catered to both emerging and experienced educators in secondary and higher education.

By linking educational theory to practice, ThinkTank identifies innovative new approaches to higher education. Integrative Teaching International evaluates ThinkTank outcomes and creates or modifies theories, policies and curricula for future ThinkTank sessions.

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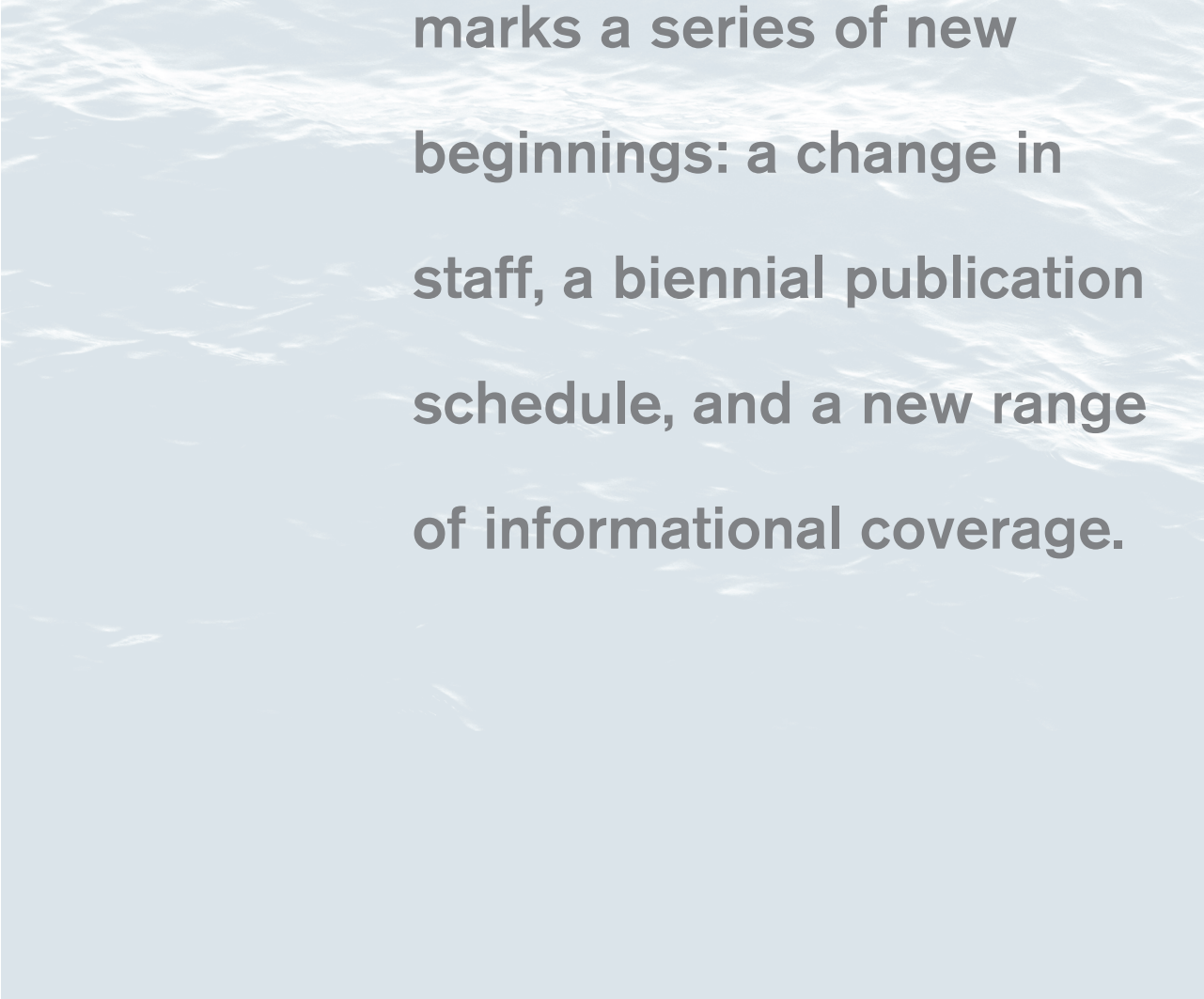
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Rae Goodwin

Foreword

Lucy Curzon

This issue of *FutureForward*



marks a series of new beginnings: a change in staff, a biennial publication schedule, and a new range of informational coverage.

Reflecting the first of these changes, the board of Integrative Teaching International (ITI) would like to acknowledge and sincerely thank Mary Stewart, our founding editor, Richard Siegesmund, ITI's former Vice-President for Publications, and Mathew Kelly, who has stewarded *FutureForward* over the past four years.

During this time, our publication has flourished—reaching out to emerging educators who are just beginning to shape the field, collaborating with master educators as they continue to challenge conventional studio and design curricula, and serving as a connection point for all scholars with interests in foundations and the broader arena of studio art and design education.

Our roughly annual schedule for publication has now shifted to a biennial schedule. This agenda will allow us not only to report on breakout sessions from our ThinkTank program

(also biennial), but likewise to cultivate more in-depth studies engaging foundations and other relevant issues. Volume 4, Issue 1, "Grounded Strategy", represents this new format. Included in this issue are three reports from ThinkTank8, held at Montana State University in Bozeman from June 11th to 14th 2014, as well as an investigation into the role of visual data—namely its analysis and teaching—in a studio art and design curriculum.

ThinkTank8, "Big Sky Vision—Grounded Strategy," continued themes first addressed in ThinkTank7 ("Foundations Now," which was held at the School of the Art Institute in Chicago) by exploring the different ways that new models, methods, and practices of contemporary art and design can be integrated into foundations classes in order to meet 21st century curricular and professional needs. Roughly fifty educators and administrators—emerging, mid-career, and master level—gathered to participate in breakout sessions that explored how new processes, concepts, and motivations might transform existing models of practice. These sessions included: "The Three R's: Rigor, Risk-Taking and Research," "Impulse and Incentive: Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivations," and "Critique, Assessment, and Rubrics: Measuring Success."

As part of the group that discussed "Impulse and Incentive: Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivations," lead

author Casey McGuire (West Georgia), along with contributors Stacy Isenbarger (Idaho), Patrick Kinsman (Herron School of Art and Design), Delane Ingalls Vanada (UNC Charlotte), and Paul R. Soloman (Western Michigan) explore how types of motivation differ and which of these are essential to successful learning. In their article, "Building a Culture That Motivates: Working with the Intrinsic and Extrinsic," the group probes the sometimes lopsided culture of a studio art or design classroom—that is, one that focuses on external rewards as opposed to internal fulfillment or vice versa—as a way of encouraging students and instructors alike to understand the importance of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. The authors, in particular, discuss how to cultivate and sustain a balanced relationship between the two.

Led by Claire van der Plas (Adams State), the group discussing "The Three R's: Rigor, Risk-Taking and Research," investigated the ways in which an effective foundations curriculum will teach students to pursue rigor and risk-taking in their research agendas. Together with van der Plas, Joan Marie Giampa (Missouri Valley College) and Joe Hedges (Northern Kentucky) continue this effort, with contributions from Jodi Lightner (Montana State-Billings), Chris Yates (Columbus College of Art and Design), James Marshall (Santa Fe Community College), Caleb Taylor (Kansas City Art Institute), Juarez Hawkins (Chicago State), and

Andrea Kantrowitz (International Drawing and Cognition Research). Their essay, "The Three (A)RRRRs: Searching for Treasure at ThinkTank Montana," takes a novel format in that it mirrors the types of formative conversation held at ThinkTank—indeed, it renews and reflects upon the very discussions started by this breakout group. Here, the authors tease out related "R" concepts that are pivotal to establishing a productive learning and teaching environment and which, in fact, spring from research, rigor, and risk-taking themselves.

In "Critique, Assessment, and Rubrics: Measuring Success," Melissa Vandenberg (Eastern Kentucky) facilitated discussion about assessment in art and design programs. In "Measuring Success: Critique, Rubrics & Assessment," the article that resulted from these discussions, Vandenberg, Lily Kuonen (Jacksonville), Erin Hoffmann (Muskegon Community College), Michael Bernhardt (Metropolitan State University of Denver), Natasha Giles (Kentucky), Valerie Powell (Sam Houston State), Katie Ries (St. Norbert College), Danielle Wagner (Northern Illinois), and Ray Yeager (Charleston) present their findings. They emphasize how the activity of mentoring might redefine the culture of assessment. Specifically, the authors discuss how relationships established via mentoring—as opposed to more traditional modes of instruction or communication—provide a more secure, enabling, and

productive ground for evaluating learning and teaching success.

The final article in this issue of *FutureForward* presents original research by Rebecca Williams (Georgia) and Richard Siegesmund (Northern Illinois). In "Visual Quantitative Reasoning: Introducing Research with Technology," the authors contextualize their experiences teaching ARTS 2100/Strategic Visual Thinking at The University of Georgia (UGA). This course, part of UGA's core curriculum, meets the university's "quantitative reasoning" requirement, but does so in a way that is more attuned to the needs of studio artists and designers than, for example, a conventional statistics class might be. In this course, students learn how to pair numerical data with visual representation. In so doing, as Williams and Siegesmund argue, students develop a rapport not only with quantifiable elements, but also cultivate necessary skills in critical thinking, reflection, inference, and creativity.





ThinkTank8

Montana State University,
Bozeman
June 11th to 14th 2014



Building a Culture That Motivates: Working with Intrinsic and Extrinsic

Lead Author:
Casey McGuire

Contributing Authors:
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Delane Ingalls Vanada, Paul R. Solomon,
and Kristin Skees

ThinkTank8 Group Participants:
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(scribe), Chris Holton, Patrick Kinsman, Delane
Vanada, Joe Chesla, Kristin Skees, Diane
Tarter, Blaine Bradford, Shaila Christofferson,
Paul Solomon, Chuck Landvatter, Vaughan
Judge, and Stacy Isenbarger

Working with Intrinsic and Extrinsic

Educators play a crucial role in designing a culture of learning, one that involves both pedagogical and curricular decisions. Truly effective educators do so in partnership with students. Fostering active, independent, and innovative life-long learners is the goal of an effective educator. Indeed, providing students with the ability to advance their own knowledge is a key paradigm shift in educational practices. This shift motivates students to alter their mode of learning from a passive approach to a shared and active one that promotes group trust and deeper creativity (Piiro, 2011).

In our current educational climate, the goal of effective educators is to promote and develop the motivated experience. Instructors strive to see or realize the interlocking nature of extrinsic motivation (e.g. “Why should I do this assignment?”) and intrinsic motivation (e.g. “I want to meet this challenge, I want to conquer my fear.”). Intrinsic motivation is the internal fulfillment a person experiences when he or she is motivated to engage in a behavior because of the personal reward received. Harnessing and identifying the intrinsic motivations of individual students in a studio classroom is paramount to supporting individualized success. Conversely, extrinsic motivation is the engagement in an activity or behavior that provides external rewards

or fulfillment. It is vital to create a culture, through curricular innovation, where intrinsic motivations feed into and help fulfill the students' extrinsic motivations. This environment allows for the internal and external reward to be satiated and thus a supportive studio culture to manifest and creativity to flourish.

This article addresses, how – as educators – we need to be cognizant of the balance between the two motivators. In other words, we need to give equal attention to engaging with our students' intrinsic motivations, and the more commonly known type of motivator, extrinsic. Both can take a multitude of forms and produce outcomes with cultural and socioeconomic attributes that vary

with the student body. Regardless the ability to cultivate and acknowledge intrinsic motivation in a college class can propel learners to become more individualized and thus to have authority over their learning.

Yet these two motivators, intrinsic and extrinsic, have the potential to be at odds with one another. As opposites, finding learning goals based on intrinsically fulfilling activities that create attainable goals, or extrinsic accolade, is a difficult balancing act. Intrinsic activities that promote extrinsic benefit can create resentment for a personally fulfilling activity. For example, outside of the classroom environment students are content to draw and sketch without observational directives. When the goals of

a set assignment become obligations, however, these otherwise fulfilling skill-based activities become burdens. Yet harmony between these motivators can occur with active listening, questioning, and open dialogue. As explored below, interrogating all experiences is a valuable tool in recognizing and harnessing motivators; in short, critical dialogue is generated and heard and this unites the internal and external motivators.

Inspiring the Intrinsic

Intrinsic motivation is realized through a subjective set of circumstances. These motivators are activated when an experience has been completed and a sense of innate enjoyment is the reward for the experience. Students will seek these experiences for their personal gratification. These forms of enjoyment that manifest from fulfillment of an activity do not manifest in external forms of accomplishment, like grades, but rather through a student's internal sense of gratification. This form of motivation signifies a self-propelled goal that is both fulfilling in process and outcome.

Environments that foster creative confidence — ones that support students in their vulnerability — are key to developing individual intrinsic motivation. When learning is meaningful and personal, students find deeper purpose in their work. As Daniel Pink reminds us: "The richest experiences of our lives happen when we're listening to our own voice — doing something that matters, doing it well, and doing it in the service of a cause larger than ourselves" (146).

The known variables of an assignment provide a structure that breeds

confidence. This creates a place of awareness and independence, as well as a platform that allows for risk-taking within the classroom. Within this structure an assignment permits a sense of inner fulfillment; that is, an intrinsic incentive. During simple, in-class challenges invoking quick responses ("find six forms in the room that challenge you and sketch them from an unexpected angle" and so forth) students are asked to reflect on the experience, and on how inherently motivated they are based on their intuitive responses, the range of their connective discoveries, and how determined they are to take on further challenges. Although they cannot be assumed or easily visible to instructors, intrinsic motivators will support the authenticity and stamina of movement forward. As self-developed qualities, these internal motivators — when acknowledged — will fuel students' strength when they are faced with external challenges. Students' senses of self-direction, resilience, and perseverance are developed while wrestling with hard questions, dealing with ambiguity, and critically seeking answers beyond the obvious. These are the kinds of intrinsic qualities that students need in order to autonomously manage the complexities of 21st century life — something that classrooms relying on extrinsic motivators cannot provide.

Intrinsic motivation, for students can be referred to as "being in the zone" or "being present in the moment." In turn, harnessing a student's intrinsic motivators creates a focused or attentive learner. Incorporating assignments with variables, non-predictable problems or direct obvious outcomes, continues to drive a student's intrinsic

motivation and promotes innovation and successful risk towards a creative outcome.

Rearranging the Extrinsic

Extrinsic factors, like better grades, future career, income, and even facebook "likes" are also motivators within the environment of the classroom. Although these "big-picture" notions of success extend motivational territory, they do not provide a close enough link to the everyday problem-solving tasks that students need to use on a daily basis. As such, assignments should not fuel these future or "far off" extrinsic desires. Rather, rationalizing positive extrinsic factors (for example, infusing pop-cultural connections; emphasizing "real life" career-based factors including public interactions or assignments that reference processes related to already existing products; or introducing student/class exhibitions, guest critiques, and peer-to-peer critiques) into real classroom experiences helps support these "big picture" goals but shifts the focus onto the relevant or "local" external accolade. In other words, as educators we can change the expectations and perspective of the external reward while still, in a sense, supporting future aspirations. This supports the extrinsic motivators by providing an outcome that is externally rewarding.

Yet supporting external accolade, while it may be the only way to motivate some students, does not necessarily support the overarching learning experience. When a classroom dynamic suggests competition for a grade, the extrinsic motivator is activated. While this is a positive drive towards success, it nonetheless prevents the intrinsically fulfilling part of the learning

process from taking place. Grading is the clearest external motivation over which an instructor has influence. But while this drive effects and positively promotes success in some students, it does not facilitate this behavior in all. Open-ended, nuanced projects and risk-taking activities – ones that encourage vulnerability – thwart the direct goal or connection to external motivators. If the assignment is graded for exploratory efforts alone, this grade can provide instructors with the ability to solidify any shaky territory left for those still seeking the familiar security of classic external acceptance measures.

Rearranging the external motivators within a curriculum through, for example, peer-to-peer critiques, self-assessment for grades, and competition that focuses on collaborative methods can brighten the extrinsic motivations. This provides positive value to the experience of extrinsic accolades, and also helps dissipate the boundary of the hierarchical relationship inherent to the classroom. A shift in external expectations reinforces a positive effect on the intrinsic and leans on other classroom agents, as listed above, for reward.

De-motivation

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivators can be extreme opposites that actually inhibit motivation. For example, many artists discuss how the enjoyment of painting leads to painting for a living, changing the motivation of the activity. The focus shifts from the creativity of painting to the economy of painting, and in this action the intrinsic motivation is stifled. The focus on commerce, in other words, relies heavily on the extrinsic and shifts

away from the intrinsically creative venture. De-motivation in the classroom can come from students being unconnected to a curriculum that only focuses on fueling one motivator. Demographic and socioeconomic factors, for example, can be inhibitors to both a student's intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. These can become active players in a student's pursuit of extrinsic goals, including a successful career, winning a scholarship, etc. Most students majoring in art and design have the expectation of a professional career in the arts after graduation and often question a project or assignment's relevance to that career. This expectation of the future can be either negative or positive in its motivation, depending on the individual, but mostly it causes students to have unrealistic longitudinal goals. This sometimes short-sighted reaction can stagnate a student's impetus to be present in the moment (i.e. demonstrate intrinsic motivation) within the class environment.

A closed or product-driven assignment is an example of how a curriculum can stifle innovation, risk, and intrinsic fulfillment. Specific outcomes that are not process driven can be indicators of an instructor's agenda for a specific product that causes students to produce artwork for a specific expectation. When an individual (instructor or student) is not promoting intrinsic values a judgmental class environment arises. This judgment can be attached to grades or specific outcomes that become extrinsic inhibitors. An example of an instructor's lack of balance can be suggestive in aggressive or defacing critiques that do not value the intrinsic decisions,

and only rewards students who meet the instructor's standards. This prevents individualized growth and reflection. To dissipate this inhibitor, the classroom environment needs to acknowledge rigor but maintain vulnerability. The open and vulnerable moment should be met with a constructed and supported dialogue. This dialogue should acknowledge both the extrinsic and intrinsic experience. Without this balance faculty can be met with defensive and frustrated students.

The goal-driven assignment, with direct and specific outcomes, stagnates the creative intrinsic potentials. In turn, intrinsic drives can lack the support of goal-driven outcomes. Innovation and engagement are at risk for failure when the environment resists a present and attentive availability. To build a culture that motivates, teachers must promote a culture of respect and real dialogue that honors varying perspectives and insights, acceptance of others, and diverse backgrounds. In order to promote group trust, teachers must model active listening and teach students to do the same. Learning to pose questions through more open and accepting dialog is key. The activation of these pedagogical objectives realizes the variations in motivators. Acceptance of various extrinsic experiences builds accountability into the cultural dynamic of the environment. Active listening and responding to the moment creates a present and available mentality within the class.

Motivating Risk and Innovation

For motivation to be at the root of all conscious learning there must be outcomes in place that support

both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. An environment of risk-taking and exploration supports creativity and active engagement. As such, the value of making mistakes must be rewarded – something that current standardized testing systems do not promote in the learning process. It is critical to value and celebrate student risk, divergent thinking, and efforts of failing forward in assignments and in the culture of learning more broadly (Kelley and Kelley, 2013). This turns the connotation of failure into a fulfilling and rewarding endeavor. In turn, critical and creative thinking are promoted and become the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation behind problem solving in a studio art classroom.

The building of information within a curriculum establishes skills for students to gain knowledge. These skill-based activities are objectives to be met and expanded upon. When the objectives of a particular curriculum lack risk, goals are easily attainable and thus stale. By creating risk, however, a mentality of inquiry and intrigue develops. Finding the platform for innovation within assignments must therefore come from the introduction of vulnerability and ambiguity. These objectives can lead to investment in problem solving and motivation, as stated above. The intrinsic and extrinsic experience can flourish when an assignment connects outcomes to the previously learned set of information or skills. A student can see their progression through experiences of reflection and the connection of the two stated motivators. Intrinsically a student can recognize their decision making process and extrinsically have these decisions reflected. Critical dialogue is generated

and heard, thus uniting the internal and external motivators. Vulnerability only is available when there is a balance of awareness and control to allow for the factors of an assignment to be questioned and manipulated.

For an open-ended assignment with an unplanned outcome to succeed, intrinsic motivation must be supported by confident facilitation. Notions of fun mixed with risk, structured challenges based on intuition, contemplation paired with collaboration, setting goals through tangential thinking — these can all be dichotomies at play in the pursuit of authentic discovery. By taking strength and vulnerability into account alongside project motivators, students are led to investigate the insightful space between these constructs. By navigating ambiguous and susceptible moments through a maintained structure, goals will become self-directed and fulfill the intrinsic motivators of individuals.

Motivators and Methodologies

Fostering risk and vulnerability is laborious to achieve. Indeed, creating an environment where vulnerability is welcome requires attentive participation from the educator. Providing students with options to create their own sets of limitations and challenges intrinsically motivates and extrinsically holds students accountable for their actions. Assignments that juggle these two types of motivations create extrinsic accountability, and intrinsically allows students to seek methods for inspiring investigation and risk-taking.

When the goal of the assignment questions an individual's set of motivations and allows them to create a

meaningful and personal investigation they develop a deeper engagement with their artwork. Executing strategies to create a class that balances self-direction and broader goals involves risk in the implementation. The ambiguous set of guidelines that provide open-ended outcomes and open-ended assessments prove never to be as mysterious in the learning objectives as students might feel, but this risk of exchange in the presentation of the information, teacher to student, can be a challenge and takes energy, vulnerability, and active listening to be delivered.

As effective teachers, creating conditions that promote positive experiences in learning, production, innovation and creation is a perpetual challenge. Our goal is to value and foster students' abilities to think independently. But today's college students are often fearful of expressing their own ideas and sharing those ideas with others. In an intrinsically centered classroom, however, power is decentralized; the teacher serves as a guide in promoting student autonomy and self-direction, thereby improving their intrinsic motivation to do the work of learning (Cullen et al., 2012; Langer, 1997).

If the intrinsic is being nurtured, and power is decentralized, then teaching can be idealized as collaboration. In this individualized learning collaboration a framework of active listening and vulnerability can be established. This collaboration increases drive from learners; they are directly listening and responding to the assessment of an artistic realization or concept. There is a circular and reinforcing movement of risk and

motivation. For the instructor to actually permit the learning impulse to be expressed, the educator must temporarily surrender authority. Learners must be allowed to authoritatively play; to guide their own activity. The return to authority in a studio classroom space (physically, psychologically and/or with rules) should then reinforce the role of instructor as facilitator and directly respond to the incentive of the shared or individual activity.

Finding moments of excitement to foster and turning these moments into honed directive thinking processes is a challenge that can be successfully met through the development of intrinsic motivators and an awareness of extrinsic goals. In this activity, students become aware of the tendencies in their own process and as they navigate course objectives.

Forward Momentum

Habitual reflection and active listening within critical analysis can support the vulnerable moment and put language to the outcome of the learner. The reflective analysis becomes an ingrained action before, during, and after promoting the growth of balance between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation within the environment and the individual. When educators are able to see the unconscious or intrinsic moments and reflect this to students it creates an active acknowledgement of motivators, recognizes vulnerability, and supports the collaborative learning process. The awareness of meaningful and personal motivators strengthens and supports extrinsic and intrinsic directives through active engagement. Knowing when to

engage is a challenge; any investment on the part of the instructor or students can create risk.

The teaching-learning environment focused on inspiring intrinsic motivations and rearranging extrinsic motivations embraces rigor and flourishes in divergent process and outcomes. Innovative solutions to problems and students' dispositions of self-direction, resilience, and perseverance establish a responsibility for cultivating motivation with regard to any given directive. Advancement through the promotion of questioning and the promotion of intrinsic investments allows extrinsic drives to maintain resilience based on self-fulfillment. Providing students with the awareness of both their extrinsic and intrinsic motivators creates lifelong learners who can satiate their own knowing.

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1 > Working with Intrinsic and Extrinsic Assignment

Dada “Newspaper” Poetry

Problem

How can students be made to understand why Dadaists made poetry from newspaper cut-ups beyond saying simply “that’s random, so it’s Dada”? That is, how can students understand conceptual (anti-) art in a simple experiential exercise?

Objectives

This experiential exercise with found objects provides knowledge of method and outcome in its original (i.e. historical) and contemporary context. In short, students gain experience “doing Dada” and perhaps “being Dada.” A friendly, and funny, conceptual exercise that experientially supports to the theory that anything can be art (or anti-art).

Materials

Magazines, scissors, glue sticks, and poster board. Magazines are suggested rather than newspapers, since they offer access to larger and multiple fonts, colors, and also images (inclusion of images is optional; instructor can decide if this activity is text-only or not).

Strategy

1. Follow Tristan Tzara’s directions (found easily online) and work in groups for efficiency. Link: <http://www.writing.upenn.edu/~afilreis/88v/tzara.html>
2. Resist the urge to combine images or text that “make sense” even if a wonderful joke or juxtaposition can be found.
3. Prepare to show and read work aloud.

Key Questions

1. Is this art? Is this poetry?
2. What do those terms mean in their historical and contemporary contexts?
3. What kind of assault on traditional notions of art is made by this activity?
4. How does humor work as or against art?
5. How do product placements or celebrities work as or against art?
6. How does chance work as or against art?

Critique Strategy

Group reaction; realization in discussion (whole class) how and why this work is conceptual and on a certain level only operates conceptually.

Timetable

20 minutes and time for discussion

Assignment Author

Patrick Kinsman, Herron School of Art and Design, rkinsman@iupui.edu

Patrick Kinsman is a Lecturer in Art History at the Herron School of Art and Design on the IUPUI campus in Indianapolis. He teaches contemporary art including video, the abject, and avant-garde film, as well as art theory and the art history capstone seminar.

2 > Working with Intrinsic and Extrinsic Assignment Process as Product

Problem

Create an action, ritual, habitual or repetitive process that produces a product. For example, how can brushing your teeth leave a mark or produce a product? If you walk to school could you trace your steps? How will a viewer experience your process visually through your product? Through a performance or chosen process pursue a divergent goal to that produces a bi-product.

Objectives

This exercise looks at the actions of contemporary artists and how their process produces divergent products. Art making can be about the way we came about the idea, but in many instances instead we hone in on what the outcome of the project should look like. In this project the process is the art. You must discover a way to produce something, but focus on the action as being the most important part of the project and the result is the evidence of the art making process. You may make your own tool or implement that aids you in your performance or process. You may consider acts of ritual or repetition that create an accumulation of an object or product. You must create something sculptural as an implement to an action or event, or a tool that aids in your creation of something.

Materials

Your process and material will be dictated by your idea. Your final product can be a performance, photograph, video, or sculpture.

Strategy

1. Consider the process of the artists/movements we have looked at: Dada, Fluxus, Gabriel Orozco, Cai Guo-Qiang, Richard Long, Peter Fischli and David Weiss, and The Art Guys, to name a few. Utilize technology to document your process/performance.
2. Choose a technology that you are familiar with but take a risk with your process/ idea. Art and life boundaries can be questioned and utilized as jumping off points for students who are making a leap with the ambiguity of this assignment.

Key Questions

1. How will you document the act of art making?
2. Will you create a physical object as the outcome or a photograph of the experience?
3. How will your viewers understand the action?

Critique Strategy

The open-ended project guidelines can create a vast array of products. Responding to students' own boundaries and their own sets of guidelines can reflect students' inhibitors, those that prevent risk-taking. Establish questions about how the performance/process is experienced by the viewer.

Timetable

Two or three weeks with major brainstorming and ideation in the beginning provide plenty of time if students are engaging.

Assignment Author

Casey McGuire, The University of West Georgia, cmcquire@westga.edu

Casey McGuire is an Assistant Professor at the University of West Georgia. McGuire is the Foundations Coordinator and also teaches in the Sculpture area.

3 > Working with Intrinsic and Extrinsic Assignment

Seeking the Ultimate Question: Approaching the Artist Interview

Problem

Students are asked to consider the *ultimate* question they would want to be asked in a future artist or designer interview. Though a two-part process classmates will explore these artful negotiations.

Objectives

Due to various social media outlets, students often have an understanding of how to project a persona visually, yet they don't have the confidence or the supportive outlet to find the words to begin to justify their choices. Through a staged interview with a peer, they can begin to consider questions they can ask each other to more fully realize their intentions.

Materials

Scrap paper, pens, and recording devices (most cell phones will do)

Strategy

1. *The Ultimate Question*: Students are asked to consider the *ultimate* question they would want to be asked in a future artist or designer interview. They can think about a creative journal or blog site they might be featured in one day and flavor the question's wording accordingly, but their question should reflect the kind of dialog they wish to have about their work in the future. Questions should be written on scraps of paper anonymously, collected, and then numbered by the instructor. The instructor then reads each question aloud to the class and students will guess who created each question based on the wording, subject, tone, etc. Before revealing correct pairings, discuss the ways students feel their peers "give themselves away." The student who guesses the most right answers gains some bragging rights and the whole class gains further insight into how their classmates assess creative value in themselves.
2. *Peer Artist Interview*: Through some process of diplomatic designation, assign students a classmate to interview the following class period. No interviewer should be interviewed by their assigned interviewee. Give each interviewer the question created by their interviewee, but ask them to create 3 authentic questions to ask their classmates. These questions can be influenced by the interviewee's question, conversations they've had in class, or aspects of their past work they've found interesting, but all questions should seek a better understanding of the maker's creative motivations. Each interview should last at least 15 minutes and be recorded.

Key Questions

Who are we as artists and designers? What makes our creations stand out? How do we dignify our concepts and approaches as we justify them?

Critique Strategy

In lieu of a critique, have interviewers transcribe their recorded interview and share them with the class. Later the instructor leads a discussion about challenges they had finding the right words and what motivations they might wish to clarify through future work. What surprised or inspired them based on how their peer phrased their questions? If the conversation were to be revisited next year, how might it be different? How might it be the same?

Timetable

Parts 1 and 2 can happen in 2 class periods. Having had a few critiques prior to conducting the exercise will support more in-depth questioning.

3 > Working with Intrinsic and Extrinsic Assignment Seeking the Ultimate Question: Approaching the Artist Interview (continued)

Assignment Author

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Stacy Isenbarger is an Assistant Professor of Art + Design and Foundations Coordinator at the University of Idaho and the President of FATE (Foundations in Art: Theory & Education).

4 > Working with Intrinsic and Extrinsic Assignment Rules of Chance

Problem

Working in teams (4-6 students), create a set of instructions for a collaborative drawing that utilizes performance and chance.

Objectives

To work collaboratively to create a single work of art using student-created rules and chance.

Materials

Drawing materials determined by the professor. This could be limited to just graphite or charcoal, or open to other materials like colored pencils and pastel. Large drawing paper; the bigger the better. Two or three blank drawing surfaces per group is optimal.

A large, smooth wall on which to hang the paper while drawing.
An element to determine chance.
A die or a hat to pull instructions from works well.

Strategy

1. Working in groups, the students collectively determine a set of rules used to complete a group drawing. There should be at least two rules per person in the group. These could be action/performance oriented rules, à la Tom Marioni (e.g. make a mark on the paper while walking from left to right past the canvas and holding a pencil waist high), or more in the vein of Sol Lewitt (e.g. Draw 5 triangles, with the largest triangle bigger than 7 inches tall). It works well to have a variety of both. The rules or instructions should be able to be executed in any order.
2. After the students have created the rules and tested them out, a mini critique of the marks and actions can be helpful depending on time allotted. This would be a good time for groups to refine or change rules that aren't working well.
3. Teams execute their drawing instructions by utilizing chance (using the Dadaists, John Cage, etc. as example artists). They could have a die system, or simply pull the instructions from a hat. Given enough time, students could create a set of variables to apply to any given rule, and determined by a roll of the dice.

For added fun and challenge, the professor can institute new rules at various moments during the drawing. For instance, "all drawing is now done with your non-dominant hand." Or, "teams will now exchange sets of instructions."

Key Questions

While the students are coming up with their instructions, it's good to reflect on instruction and contribute to the work and the experience. For instance, can all the members of the team execute the instruction? At the same time, is there room for individual variation and innovation to keep the instruction interesting and fresh?

Critique Strategy

While this project is all about process and experience, and less about the resulting work, the critique is usually most useful during the creation of the work. Stepping back and assessing composition at various stages is helpful. Photograph the works in progress so that the resulting images can be reviewed after the fact to see how the work progressed.

After the work is completed, there is group critique about the experience of working together and making work based on chance. To extend this project even further, students can choose one mark or theme from the collaborative

4 > Working with Intrinsic and Extrinsic Assignment Rules of Chance (continued)

work to use as the basis for an individual piece. The individually chosen rule can be re-interpreted and incorporated conceptually or compositionally into the next project.

Timetable

While this is a project that can be easily completed in one class period (approximately 2-2.5 hours), it can also be stretched over 2 or 3 classes. When completed in one class period, it's a great icebreaker for early in the semester, since students can interact with each other and get out of their seats to move around the class space. When given more time, students have time to refine instructions and create more variables for exploring more outcomes.

Assignment Author

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The Three (A)RRRRs: Searching for Treasure at Think Tank Montana

Lead Authors:

Claire van der Plas, Joan Marie Giampa,
and Joe Hedges

Contributing Authors:

Jodi Lightner, Chris Yates, James Marshall,
Caleb Taylor, Juarez Hawkins,
and Andrea Kantrowitz

ThinkTank8 Participants:

Claire van der Plas (facilitator), Joe Hedges
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Jodi Lightner, Chris Yates, Caleb Taylor,
Katy Mixon, Joan Giampa, Juarez Hawkins,
Andrea Kantrowitz and James Marshall

Mutiny abounded during our final presentation at ThinkTank 8 this summer in Montana. For two intense days, our group of twelve had been dauntless as we sailed through rough seas finding meaning and making connections on the topic of risk, research and rigor—the three “R’s.” From the first discussion till the very end of our journey, the group’s intensity and restlessness converged into a pirate metaphor – the final presentation was a one act play based on a pirate ship escapade during which each group member embodied an “R” – and this metaphor lives on in the subsequent collaborative writing of the group.

Pirates seemed a most apt characterization for this group – a bunch of adventurous thinkers, always close to mutiny and always willing to sail into uncharted waters. Besides being enjoyable, this also proved to be a surprisingly rich source of useful metaphors because it led us to broaden the scope of our discussion and thus discover many more important “R’s”.

Two days is a very short time to work with ideas as complex as the (three-fold) topic of our panel. As the group discussed these three ideas a theme that floated up again and again was that of the classroom environment – a big part of which is the relationships established there. These include

relationships between faculty and students, students and students, classroom and studio, specific courses and the broader curriculum, and of course the relationships between risk, rigor and research. This aspect of the conversation – how to build an environment / set of relationships that foster the three “R’s” – was the magnetic north to which our compasses kept turning. And although any attempt to distill the questions, musings, reactions, and responses of twelve people into a single coherent “take-away” is necessarily doomed, the question that resonated most strongly was, “How do we build environments and relationships that foster the attitudes and practices, including,

but not limited to, rigor, risk-taking and research, that we want our students to develop?”

A discussion that begins with a topic that is actually three topics is bound to be diverse and complex. This fact led to the embrace of wide-ranging conversation as a worthy goal in itself. Good conversations generate excitement and ideas. Each person is interpreting what’s said through the lens of his or her own experience and for its potential application to individual teaching situations. Just as this is true for actual participants in a verbal discussion, it can be true for readers. Different voices, metaphors and modes of expression resonate

with different readers. A multiplicity of viewpoints and interpretations can occur concurrently. For these reasons this article is presented in a conversation format. It is an experiment in re-visiting and developing the results of our collaborative efforts in Montana.

Joan Giampa: The group's voyage was a struggle to find new meaning inside the boat's "timbers" similar to the Greek paradox as reported by Plutarch:

"The ship wherein Theseus and the youth of Athens returned from Crete had thirty oars, and was preserved by the Athenians down even to the time of Demetrius Phalereus, for they took away the old planks as they decayed, putting in new and stronger timber in their place, in so much that this ship became a standing example among the philosophers, for the logical question of things that grow; one side holding that the ship remained the same, and the other contending that it was not the same." (Plutarch, Theseus)

The "timbers" we replaced were more "R's": Relationships, Reflection, Reiteration, Reward, Reason, Relevance, Revolution and Resolution.

The "R's" became personas that seeded the final script giving each individual "R" a special voice and meaning. Each pirate wore a hat that labeled and characterized them as their "R" character. Each individual read their part of the script out loud during the final minutes of the second day. It seemed as if the "Rs" chose us. I was Revolution. My character's purpose was to lead the other pirates away from theory and methodology. My goal was to steer clear of pedagogical constructs.

Claire van der Plas: Other pirates argued that theory, methodology and pedagogical constructs were important. Of these, one pedagogical element in particular kept surfacing – the deliberate building of relationships within a classroom environment.

Jodi Lightner: Relationship is another "R" that demands consideration in the quest for a well-educated, challenged, and successful student in the foundations program. Looking at the classroom as a group of students with a faculty leader, we find any one of these constituents can drastically alter the attitude and productivity of the learning environment and thus alter the success of a project outcome or even course if the attitude is contrary to learning. Looking at the human-to-human interactions within this learning environment and how the faculty leader can influence them may be a solution to having more success with our projects and courses.

The relationship between the faculty and the students is very important and the faculty has significantly more responsibility for its development. Some factors that can lead to positive teaching and learning relationships include intentionally engaging each student individually, building trust by being open and clear in instruction and conversation, developing rapport with the student community, and modeling the work ethic and enthusiasm desired.

James Marshall: It's very important to model the behaviors we want to encourage. This applies especially to risk-taking. Perhaps the first step is staying involved with our own personal studio practice; that is, remaining familiar with the necessary work and risk involved with honest art making. One must walk the talk. Then one must bring that knowing intimacy of working from one's private studio into the classroom with the enthusiasm of a seasoned explorer. The confidence and commitment of one's own art practice influences the

classroom to no small degree. Additionally self-empathy manifests when one puts in the time in one's studio. We know how challenging it can be to do the work and thus empathy for the sincere art student is demonstrated naturally to her.¹

Claire van der Plas: Clearly faculty/student relationships are important and through building these mindfully we can create a useful environment. Peer-to-peer relationships are also very important. Students' attitudes, work ethics and willingness to engage in meaningful critique can be contagious among the group. During the ThinkTank sessions several group members shared techniques they used to promote critical honesty from students, who are often inclined to want to reward everybody and not voice negative judgments about their peers' work.

I recall Andrea Kantowitz describing one such technique. At the start of critique, Andrea gives her students two yellow sticky notes and a blue one. The students put the yellow ones on work that is rigorous — that achieved the assignment. The blue note, however, is for something totally outside the parameters of the assignment but that is nonetheless “really cool.” Andrea recalled that the yellow notes usually coalesce around two or three drawings, but that the blue notes are scattered throughout the critique room. In other words, blue stickers give the students the opportunity to acknowledge work just because they like it. That being said, she also makes the students justify their choices. When they tag something, they need to offer a solid rationale for doing so. Jason Lee described another approach. He has his students put all of their work in a line and then asks the group to shift the works up or down the line in order of perceived value. This allows the students to express a critical voice and also, importantly, to be accountable for it. Indeed, Jason explained that the forced ranking process echoes real-world situations, such as jurying or grading, and that it makes the students think about the selection criteria. He does allow students to place works in clusters of equally successful pieces.

Jodi Lightner: The role that student peers play in creating a learning environment may not be as clearly connected to the faculty role in the classroom, yet it is evident in peer groups that students effectively challenge one another, build rapport during class conversation, and feed off each other's ideas. Verbally expressed enthusiasm for projects and positive attitudes can spread through a class just as easily as the negatively charged expressions. As faculty facilitating the environment, it would be helpful to harness the positive attitudes and curb the negative ones in order to give students the sense that they can indeed tackle the questions and projects presented to them and build community in the classroom. It would seem that as students become more comfortable with their peers, they are increasingly influenced and may be more likely to take risks in their projects.

Claire van der Plas: Which brings us back to risk. We've talked about ways to encourage risk taking but what about measuring it? And what can we do when a student does take risks but doesn't reach a successfully resolved work?

In Montana, I recall that Jason Lee again proposed one approach. In his own teaching, he questions how to deal with a student who takes a viable risk, but whose project ends in disaster. This is a particularly difficult situation to deal with when other students have followed all the rules. What Jason does with the risk-taker is praise him or her publicly. He points out where the project went wrong – yet he highlights how those risks could lead to resolutions. As Jason pointed out, even if the project is a failure, as instructors we need to re-iterate that resolution (not necessarily success) is a vital part of art making.

My own approach is to make both these aspects explicit in the rubric and I include the rubric I'm going to use when I give out the assignment – so they know how they're going to be assessed. If an assignment is about prolonging the process or taking risks, there's a line in my rubric that says "evidence of multiple attempts" or "evidence of exploration" or something similar, as well as another category for level of resolution. The total grade for the assignment will be highest when students are successful in both areas.

Jodi Lightner: One thing I use in feedback is language. I say, "Your risk or creativity is taking it beyond the goals. How far beyond did you go? How much did you make it your own? Who is doing that the most?" Those phrases resound with my students. My other practice is – after the class produces a body of work – to play survivor and throw projects off the island. In this scenario, each student is confronted with judging his or her own work.

Chris Yates: Educational research indicates that students often focus their energy on the act of making and spend far less time assessing results. Yet experience shows that the best students try new strategies when they fail and refine strategies when they succeed. Less accomplished students tend to shrink back – sometimes repeating the same mistake again and again. Many rely on entrenched beliefs about talent and intelligence and thus avoid the harder path of work and perseverance. The foundation studies classroom environment should counter false premises and recognize the importance of a positive learning community. It should be a place where success is rewarded but where it's equally safe to fail. Of the conditions most favored in the foundations studies classroom, reflection is arguably the key. It is an essential player in a learner-centered, inquiry-based education model. As a fundamental metacognitive skill, reflection is where both action and learning are assessed. In the learner's mind, the reflective act becomes a source of motivation inspiring him or her to continue or discard a path of action.

James Marshall: It is of paramount importance to impress upon the student that failure through real risk is no failure at all. Here, as art guide (teacher, faculty, mentor), we can build a foundational assignment where failure is the goal. The success of this assignment is to see which students can have singular discoveries that are authentic and thereby achieve a true measure of success through dancing with the prospect of failure.

Claire van der Plas: And here we arrive at another idea that's been a

continuing thread in the conversation. In order to foster risk-taking and rigor we can use both overt and covert strategies. The type of assignment that James just suggested, and the modeling of behaviors we wish to encourage are overt strategies, but sometimes a planned surprise or a hidden agenda can work even better – setting up the conditions for an “aha” moment...

Chris Yates: ...which can be achieved by setting up reflective moments. As educators we must devote as much attention to reflection as we do to making. We have many strategies for teaching reflection, including requiring students to reflect on their performance, prompting students to analyze the effectiveness of their approach, fostering constructive peer-to-peer response and critique, and, more generally, broadening students' understanding of what learning means.

Claire van der Plas: So while the student may have thought that the aim of the assignment was, for example, to make a form out of Bristol board, they may find out at critique time, or through the use of tools like written reflection or self-assessment, as Chris suggests, that many other “hidden” goals have been accomplished also and that their skill set is growing.

Joan Giampa: To return to the pirate metaphor: “reward is not the treasure... change is our reward”!

James Marshall: Live the question. An all too familiar scenario that many artist-teachers have fallen into is giving away too much information, too many answers to the problem at hand. Here the Socratic method is of paramount importance in keeping the student creatively engaged in her project.

Self-reliance leads to self-discovery and a greater feeling of success. This is a much tougher way of teaching but infinitely more rewarding for the student and for the instructor. Hold fast to the masthead of the question and the student will eventually arrive at an appropriate answer/destination.

Joe Hedges: Artists work in ways that are not dissimilar from the ways that scientists work; artists ideate, follow lines of inquiry, conduct research, take risks and pursue every step of the creative process with rigor that parallels processes of other disciplines.

Claire van der Plas: So we've segued from risk to rigor. Iterative approaches to thinking and making – encouraging rigor through requiring multiple attempts, versions, sketches, revisions – can also foster risk-taking as the student becomes less attached to a single “perfect” outcome and more interested in processes and exploration.

During the sessions Andrea Kantrowitz mentioned a book called *The Reflective Practitioner* that looks at expert and professional practitioners. Based on her reading, Andrea described a cycle between action and reflection. While some students do rapid cycling, others act and act and then reflect. As she noted, there can be as many rhythms as there are individuals in

the classroom. Taking into account Andrea's observations, I argue that this is what we are trying to instill in the students. How do you develop the ability to do that cycling? That is, to keep building instead of being satisfied with the first idea or outcome?

Chris Yates: Within Bloom's taxonomy, reflection seems to occupy a place among all three learning domains – cognitive, psychomotor and affective. However, it is the affective domain where it seems most at home. In the case of the foundation studies classroom, reflection is thinking connected to actions and investigations. To teach this is to teach self-actualization and personal motivation.

Claire van der Plas: So far we have not spent much time on the idea and practice of research and its role in the process. As with the other topics, the conversation raised diverse and varied approaches and attitudes to research and also highlighted the way all the sub topics are linked together. Here is a snippet from the session transcript illustrates the way conversation can present rich information in a condensed but fluid way. It is inserted here in its original conversational form because the process of paraphrasing would close off many of the open ends and avenues for further thought that this format leaves intact.

Caleb Taylor: What is research? Finding out more. "Things" must happen before research happens. Research follows a state of awareness and/or action.

Jodi Lightner: Instead of spoon-feeding, the reason to put research after action is to encourage self-driven research – creating an environment where [the students]...begin to ask questions.

Claire van der Plas: That ties it to risk and rigor

Andrea Kantrowitz: What is the relationship between inquiry and research? Those have gotten mushed up a little. There are actual steps. Inquiry is a process of problem seeking. Inquiry is thinking it through: What am I concerned about? What do I want to know? Research is reaching out into the world beyond what you know.

Joe Hedges: Is taking a walk research? Experience? Life experience?

Andrea Kantrowitz: The word that people leave out in research is "deliberate". When you for a walk in a mindful way, and there's a rigor [invested in]...that.

James Marshall: Quieting the mind rather than filling the mind.

Joe Hedges: Can you do that in classroom, that kind of clearing away, instead of [gathering more]?

Claire van der Plas: What about research through playing with materials? I call it "thinking with your hands." [That is,] the idea of experimentation and iteration in a physical way, without a goal in mind – seeing what you can do with stuff, with things.

Andrea Kantrowitz: Teaching learning and making as processes, that's what you are modeling – suspending the solution in favor of questions.

Claire van der Plas / Joe Hedges: This idea of suspending a solution was a key part in the ThinkTank process and is the main idea underpinning this (risky) experiment with written conversational form. From the ancient philosophers pondering the nature of Theseus's continually renewed ship to a mutinous group of foundations art educators in eye-patches debating the roles of "Risk, Rigor and Research," conversation is not only a valid mode of scholarly exchange, it is also the foundation of society, culture and learning.

This article serves as further reflection upon the process of dialogue – further discoveries of relationships between ideas and, hopefully, the sharing of our "treasures" with others beyond the original crew. The success of ThinkTank is its creation of an open forum for individual educators to express divergent and compelling ideas. In the classroom, at faculty meetings, and even in academic writing, a rapid but positive exchange of challenging and divergent ideas rarely takes place.

Toward the end of an enriching two days it became clear that the only presentation format that would allow for the wide range of interesting ideas to be heard was to create a skit. The pirate crew, with their multiplicity of voices, focused on a process not a product, and a dramatic performance could frame the exploratory nature of the dialogue in a way that was lighthearted but still thoughtful. Here too, we have resorted to recording exchanges of ideas rather than a didactic presentation of facts.

The first mutiny was against limiting ourselves to only three "Rs" – after this the voyage led to the discovery of many more including two that the group felt really underpinned the others – relationships (or environment) and reflection. Perhaps there are an unusually high number of R-words that represent concepts that relate to foundations education? But it is also

true that thinking about foundations education can be infinitely explored, expanded and reframed. Expandable borders and shifting arenas evoke ongoing issues or questions relevant to our discussions, including — how can we craft a curriculum that honors historical processes, connects with existing student interests, and anticipates changing expectations for artists and designers?

Foundations education encourages and embraces innovation and risk-taking, working with rigor and conducting research that synthesizes ideas and builds connections between multiple disciplines. These are the very skills that may be the most important to workers in the 21st century. Thus, skills learned in foundations are not only relevant to arts learning, they are relevant to all modes of learning and practice. Our students sail out on different seas but abide by the same laws of social physics, intermittently evading storms, creating adventures and then rigorously staying their course. As educators we must teach our students to see the ocean for the waves — to learn to make use of various resources to unfold a larger map of lifelong creative success. The hard technical skills included in foundations education will undoubtedly continue to evolve. As such, the three "R's" – rigor, risk-taking, and research – will always be relevant.

Footnotes

1. From the website: Befriending ourselves (<http://www.befriendingourselves.com/Self-empathy.html>)- "What is Self-Empathy? When you think of empathy, you probably think of putting yourself in someone else's shoes, imagining what their life is like. Empathy is about connecting with what it's like to be someone else. In order to empathize with someone, you need to pay attention to them and really listen to them. Self-empathy is similar, but it's about really listening to yourself. It's about connecting with what's alive in you, turning your attention inward to see what is going on for you. Self-empathy is particularly helpful when you're experiencing some sort of emotional discomfort. It is a way to stay connected with yourself when your tendency is to avoid or distract."

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1 > The Three R's: Rigor, Risk-Taking and Research Assignment

Historical Re-enactments

Problem

"Historical Re-enactments" is a Foundations assignment that brings together explorations in self-portraiture, cross-disciplinary processes, and collaboration. Students working in groups (3-5 each) will research a historical artwork and construct a monumental installation that recreates the selected work through drawing and digital processes. Graphite portrait drawings will be scanned, enlarged, printed using Reprographic printers, and assembled to recreate these historical compositions.

Objectives/Assessment Targets

Following this assignment, students will have:

- an expanded understanding of collaboration and an increased ability to communicate with peers.
- improved graphic acumen as it relates to traditional modes of drawing.
- an understanding of how scale can be manipulated using gridding translations and digital methods.
- an introduction to digital methods including scanning, image-editing using Photoshop, and file preparation for printing.
- greater exposure to ways of creating and defining subject matter in their studio work.

Strategy

1. As a group, discuss which historical work will be the basis for your historical reenactment. Research/select an artwork, document group members mimicking poses using digital cameras, and print images as pose references. If props are significant to your historical image (costumes, furniture, animals, etc.), include them in your drawing or identify inventive substitutes to ensure their significance is maintained. Strong examples include Gericault's *Raft of Medusa*, Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*, Warhol's *Triple Elvis*, Wall's *A Sudden Gust of Wind*, etc.
2. Drawings will be created as a diptych on 2 sheets of 9"x12" Bristol board (each full-figure portrait will stretch across two sheets). The scanner bed is 9"x12" and to ensure surface area for detailed rendering and to increase the quality of the enlargement, each final drawing size will be 18"x12" (Graphite).
3. Translate the scale of your reference to fit your 18"x12" format by using a 2" grid system. To ensure proper scale is maintained, each group member should use the same grid size.
4. Execute full-value drawing using digital photograph as reference.
5. Spray fix surface of drawing to prevent smudging.
6. Scan each 9"x12" drawing as individual .jpeg file at high-resolution (300 dpi, grayscale).
7. Using Photoshop, stitch the two files into single image and save as a PDF. Reprographic printing is enlarged exponentially – each drawing should be printed life-size (minimum).
8. Cut out printed figures and install in classroom as a group using tape and map pins.
9. Discuss how to address the scale of your assigned installation space and select a work that fits these parameters. Figures can be incorporated/overlapping or individual in historical artwork and installation. Additional mixed-media can be used to emphasize the historical narrative if desired.

Alternative process

Rather than drawing and assembling isolated figures/portraits, a group may choose to capture a single reference image and divide this image into equal segments for each group member to render. Printed images can be printed and installed in panels.

1 > The Three R's: Rigor, Risk-Taking and Research Assignment

Historical Re-enactments (continued)

Materials

Each student will need 2 sheets of 9"x12" Bristol board, Ebony graphite pencils, a drafting eraser, digital prints for reference, and map pins and tape for final installation. The group should have access to a flat-bed scanner, 1 digital camera, and reprographic printing facilities (large-format blueprint printers generally available at architecture companies).

Note

Reprographic printers generally have 42" max width capacity and cost approximately \$.25/sq.ft. Since this printing method is inexpensive, expanding scale by combining multiple prints creates effective outcomes.

Key Questions

1. As a group, how do we use grids and ratios to maintain consistent scale translations between members?
2. What techniques and modes of thinking can be gained from your peers?
3. What consideration has each group given to the installation space? Is the selection of the enacted historical work influenced by the size/proportions of this space (horizontal vs. vertical)?
4. As a group, what is your connection to the historical work that you selected? What are inventive ways to address themes such as gender, dramatic action, and setting to create an accurate portrayal?

Critique Strategy

A component of the Historical Re-enactments Project addresses the re-contextualization of historical imagery. In order for students to establish points of discussion addressing their conceptual intentions, each student writes and presents a statement explaining their contextual focus in relationship to the work's historical intent. These statements are the basis for our critical discussion, which aims to address the collaborative choices surrounding interpretation, presentation, and how the work can adapt to new ideas.

Additional critiquing strategies that address issues of execution include:

1. Investigating the quality of drawing, including proper use of enlargement methods including gridding and scanning.
2. Examining digital translations including file preparation and final print quality
3. Examining productive methods of collaboration and the expansion of communication skills, establishment of roles, distribution of tasks, and maintaining personal responsibilities.

Timetable Required

At KCAI, the fall Foundations schedule is sixteen contact hours per week (Monday-Thursday @ 4 hours per day). The duration of this project from beginning of collaborative discussions to final installation and critique is eight days. This timetable includes documentation, drawing, scanning/editing, printing, and final site-specific installation. With the use of contracted services,

1 > The Three R's: Rigor, Risk-Taking and Research Assignment

Historical Re-enactments (continued)

24-48 hours of time in the middle of the project is dedicated to printing. This time can be used to plan/construct installation components and/or focus on written responses.

Assignment Author

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Caleb Taylor is a 2010 Charlotte Street Foundation Fellow whose practice freely navigates the disciplines of painting, photography, collage, and sculpture. He is the recipient of the prestigious Joan Mitchell Foundation MFA Grant (2008) and also won a 2014 ThinkTank Emerging Educator Fellowship. He has completed residencies at Vermont Studio Center, Urban Culture Project, and Ucross Foundation. His paintings and drawings are published in *New American Painting* and have been exhibited at numerous venues including the Nerman MoCA, Grand Arts (KC), CUE Art Foundation (NY), and Sherry Leedy Contemporary Art. He resides in Kansas City, Missouri where he is an instructor in the School of the Foundation Year at the Kansas City Art Institute and a founding member of the artist-run space, Plug Projects.

2 > The Three R's: Rigor, Risk-Taking and Research Assignment

Art(ing) in Public: A Response to Public Art in Chicago

Problem

Students will visit and examine public art works that are currently installed in the city of Chicago. They will “adopt” an artist whose work is of interest and research the artist and their works, paying attention to form, media, content, and public engagement. They will then create a 3D piece that responds in some way to the work of their adopted artist.

Objectives/Assessment Targets

Following this assignment, students will have:

- developed relevant research skills central to developing a body of artwork.
- gained real-world skills by developing a proposal similar to those used for grants, exhibitions and other professional opportunities. This proposal will include a response paper, CV, images of prior work, sketches, and a freestanding maquette of the proposed artwork.
- developed skills in presenting and documenting their work.

Strategy

Explore the city's vast array of public art:

1. “My Public Art Tour” is one way to see many great public art pieces in situ. This two-hour walking tour of downtown Chicago features works by Picasso, Miró, Moore, Nevelson, Stella, and a host of others. The Department of Cultural Affairs oversees most of the public art works installed in Chicago. It has posted highlights from this collection, both online and as a downloadable pdf, on its website: <http://www.cityofchicago.org/culturalaffairs>.
2. The exhibition “35 Years of Public Art in Chicago” at the Chicago Cultural Center is also a good place to begin. The show features a wide variety of proposal art and maquettes, mostly for artwork that actually won city commissions. Highlights from this exhibition, featuring over a dozen works, are archived at www.cityofchicago.org.
3. From the selection of artists on display, along with a list of historical and contemporary 3D artists, students will select an artist whose work engages them. Students will study their artist's work in depth, making use of the library and online searches. Many museum websites, such as the Art Institute of Chicago's (www.artic.edu), have searchable archives of the works in their collections. Our art department has a license for use of the ArtSTOR database. Both databases allow students to create their own personal mini-archives of artworks.

Key Questions

1. Who selects the artwork for our public spaces?
2. How are artists selected?
3. What is the Percent for Art Program?
4. FORM: Does the shape/form of the work interest you? How does the artist employ color, texture, or other Elements and Principles of Design? Consider works by Picasso, Alexander Calder, and Henry Moore.
5. MEDIUM: What materials are being used? How can you replicate the look/feel/texture of those materials? Could recycled/repurposed materials be employed in the work? Consider works by Jean Dubuffet, Frank Stella, Louise Nevelson, and Frank Gehry.
6. CONTENT: Does the artist tell a story with the work? Is someone being

2 > The Three R's: Rigor, Risk-Taking and Research Assignment

Art(ing) in Public: A Response to Public Art in Chicago (continued)

Materials

As part of the 3D Design course, students have ready access to and are familiar with the use of plaster, paint, wood, clay, and wire, along with various adhesives. Basic hand tools are also provided, including coping saws, metal snips, hot glue guns, kraft knives, rasps, and files.

Students are encouraged to make use of recycled/repurposed materials, such as plastic bottles, soda cans, Styrofoam packing, cardboard, straws, aquarium gravel, etc.

honored or memorialized? What message does the artist convey in their work, and what do you, as an artist, have to say in return? Consider works by Houston Conwill, Alison Saar, and Preston Jackson.

7. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT: Consider the impact of your work in a public space. What type of space (public park, library, train station, office building, etc.) would be best suited for your work? How would the public interact with your work? Can your installed piece be touched, climbed upon, etc.? Consider works by Jaume Plensa, Anish Kapoor, Arvaud Strauss, Cows on Parade, and Karl Wirsum.

Critique Strategies

1. Sketchbook (individual): Students discuss their chosen artist, and show draft sketches of their proposed work.
2. Process Critique (group): Review the work about halfway through the process. Discuss direction, challenges, and next steps.
3. Final Critique (group): Students respond to finished work and sketches. Sometimes students provide written responses to prompts about their peers' work.

Timetable

This activity requires a minimum of eight 3-hour class sessions, plus outside studio time. Two sessions per week.

- Week 1: Public Art Tour; discuss assignment; demonstrate online research tools; students select an artist, begin research and sketches.
- Week 2: Review sketches; demonstrate use of repurposed materials.
- Week 3: Process Critique; demonstrate how to shoot and document artwork.
- Week 4: Final presentations and critiques

Assignment Author

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Juarez Hawkins teaches a wide range of courses, including Drawing, 3D Design, and Introduction to Visual Arts. Previously, she served as Teaching Artist for such programs as Gallery 37, Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education, and Little Black Pearl Workshop. She is a two-time recipient of the Oppenheimer Foundation Teacher Incentive Award.

3 > The Three R's: Rigor, Risk-Taking and Research Assignment

Blogging as Research and Record (PDF)

Problem

Students keep a blog that records their thinking, researching and making processes. Blogging can be used as an extension of the classroom environment to strengthen both the depth and breadth of student engagement with course material, while building an easily accessible portfolio of class work over the course of the semester, establishing a professional network of peers online, and providing additional opportunities for assessment and critique.

Objectives/Assessment Targets

Following this assignment, students will:

- be able to build a web presence
- present themselves professionally
- have improved writing and critical thinking skills
- have improved documentation skills
- be able to create a searchable trove of influences, works, and ideas
- be able to connect with others and keep engaged with a creative community
- have developed self-discipline through writing and cataloging art processes and influences

Materials

Free blogging platforms such as www.wordpress.com or www.weebly.com.

Strategy

- Students create at least two blog posts for each project throughout the course. Between them, these two posts must include:
 - initial research including inspiring artists and ideas.
 - photographs (or digital images) of the steps of your creative process with descriptions.
 - a photo or photos of your final piece.
 - a written statement or reflection about your final work

Key Questions

For each project, the following should be covered on the blog:

1. Is the blog design clean and easy to read and navigate? Your blog should be free from distracting background images and garish colors.
2. Is the written information professional in tone and free from errors in grammar, punctuation, syntax and spelling?
3. Do the posts include discussions of creative influences?
4. Is it clear how your work relates to (and differs from) the work of your influences?
5. Do posts of this kind contain embedded images or videos, including hyperlinks to more images or information about the artists you describe?
6. Are your own photographs properly exposed, well-lit, sharp, color balanced, cropped appropriately with uncluttered compositions?
7. Do all images contain a caption or descriptive text including artist name, the name of the work and the year?
8. Do posts provide a behind-the-scenes look at your technical process and research activities?
9. Does the blog have a clear and professional tone that represents your interests and personality as an artist?
10. Does the blog include an "About Me" or "Bio" page that reveals information about the artist in a professional manner?
11. Does the blog include an archive widget that contains all previous posts and allows the blog to be easily searched?

3 > The Three R's: Rigor, Risk-Taking and Research Assignment

Blogging as Research and Record (PDF)

(continued)

12. Does the blog make use of categories that help students organize aspects of their creative process (ex. "My Work," "Exhibitions," "Influences and Inspiration," etc.)?
13. Does each post include at least three tags, allowing content to be organized by keyword (include at least two per post)?
14. Does each post contain images and hyperlinks to other websites?

Critique Strategy

Students set up blogs as homework. Then, class time is allotted to address any technical or aesthetic shortcomings in a workshop environment. Once the blogs are online, students present their blogs and their first posts to the class. Classmates address concerns with the functionality, professionalism, and overall impact of the blog. Students are then given a chance to revise their blogs. Once the blogs are online, individual posts (and projects) are critiqued online by the instructor as well as classmates in class and out of class, providing feedback in the form of comments. Students must leave one comment on the blog of a classmate once a week.

Timetable

The blog is an extension of the classroom environment and follows the timetable of the course. The blog is to be online within the first week of class. For each project, the first post is due by the next class meeting after the project has been introduced. The second post is due by the next class meeting after the in-class critique. There may be additional requirements throughout the semester such as a gallery or museum visit reflection or critique, or more specific and personal reflections about art-making.

Assignment Author

Joe Hedges, Northern Kentucky University, hedgesj2@nku.edu.

Joe Hedges is currently teaching Foundations, drawing, and painting at Northern Kentucky University near Cincinnati, OH. With a reverence for history, art history, and the past, combined with an enthusiastic interest in the effects of digital technologies on human aesthetic and sociological experience, Hedges art melds vocabularies and media.

Measuring Success: Critique, Rubrics & Assessment

Lead Authors:

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**“Success isn’t the result of
spontaneous combustion, you
must set yourself on fire.”**

– Arnold H. Glasow

Who Assesses the Assessors?

A conversation regarding success cannot be separated from a conversation on failure. The two are necessary bedfellows—and in higher education these bedfellows are regularly at odds. We measure the successes of students, programs and universities via outcomes, often without assessing *how* we arrived at those outcomes. This is a systematic problem involving all tiers of the institution. In today's culture of assessment, students often interpret outcomes as an indication that there is only one correct answer.

Consequently, they are scared of grading practices that encourage growth and risk-taking. In turn, faculty members carry deep anxiety over mandatory assessments and, more specifically, how the collected data may be used. Departments struggle with managing and archiving data in addition to implementing changes brought on by assessment. Finally, institutions desire and deserve accountability, but sometimes prioritize the gathering of assessment data over education itself.

In order to best serve our students and to provide legitimate assessment data we must seek new evaluative options that are efficient, creative, and radical. In our discussion we assert that these practices are important for developing effective assessment procedures, ones that – in particular

— generate data at crucial intervals to avoid data overload, faculty fatigue, and student anxiety. If we design assignments and rubrics to value soft skills and encourage students to take risks, with the expectation of an occasional failure, then they will more fully understand abstract curricular objectives like “process” and thus build their curiosity and develop skills that promote deeper learning. If we align our instructional strategies with institutional missions we can focus on the student experience as the axis point for assessment. This ensures that the data gathered is relevant and maintains a shared focus for faculty and institutional constituents. In what follows, we consider how all contributors to the assessment loop are responsible for adapting their performance towards positive change, and that this process can be equated with

assessment as a form of mentorship. Assessment, in this context, creates the narrative for development and confirms the importance of the creative process.

(Why) Is Assessment Important?

Assessment is at the core of what we do as instructors and is done with more regularity than we recognize. It has many aliases – grading, evaluations, critiques and even jurying. Indeed, daily interactions with students as we answer questions, foster discussions and facilitate critiques are also forms of assessment. These sorts of routine impromptu evaluations are something studio-based fields do well and they often offer the most individualized gains for our students. But can this method of contextualized feedback be formalized into a measurable assessment strategy?

If we use our courses as models, we know that feedback and mutual investment can be empowering tools. Assessment has the reputation of being an oppressive mechanism fueled by fears of accountability and overbearing supervision. This reputation is superseded when faculty take ownership and authorship of the process. Ideally, the evaluation process should be as straightforward as possible; one that is designed at the program level by faculty who are teaching the material being assessed. In short, the program and faculty should have ownership of the plan. With ownership comes faculty investment and with investment come truly useable results.

These results can lead faculty to align program goals and outcomes with institutional missions. Effective curricular assessment should answer relevant key questions developed by the faculty, and perhaps even the students. Is the program or department doing what it says it is doing? Looking to current trends in higher education, are we graduating students with the skills and knowledge they need? Do our educational and creative goals correspond to our institutional goals? Methods of assessment should be embedded in the curriculum at strategic points as determined by faculty. The assessment tool should be easy to understand, explain and use. If it is not straightforward to implement and extract information from, it will go underutilized. This necessitates the design of an assessment plan that performs for the students, faculty, and the institution.

Modes of Assessment

Three basic forms of traditional assessment are formative, interim, and summative (Perie, 2007). In studio art, formative assessment is most commonly done before and during a project or course (e.g. in-class discussions, critiques, or peer review). It provides an opportunity to receive immediate feedback regarding student learning and can contribute to comprehensive assessment by enabling faculty to identify program milestones that measure learning.

way that material is being presented and interpreted by students. It provides data that can point to possible improvements in the curriculum in real time.

Summative assessment is a comprehensive evaluation that provides conclusive feedback at the end of a project, course, semester or program (e.g. portfolio, course and program reviews, etc.). Due to its summative nature, it is especially useful for examining students' progress to ensure they

	FORMATIVE	INTERIM	SUMMATIVE
Key Question >	Does the class/student understand and apply the outcomes?	Is the class/student demonstrating continuing development of the outcomes?	Has the class/student met the outcomes?
When Asked >	Ongoing in the classroom	Multiple times a year	End of the course, term, or year
Types >	Critiques, working critiques, peer reviews	Midterm reviews, selected projects, course grades	Portfolio reviews, final grades, program reviews, etc.
Use of results >	During instruction. Provide direct student and teacher feedback and adjustment of instruction.	Between instructional cycles. Provide early/midterm performance data on outcomes, goals, and objectives.	After instruction ends. Provide feedback for program to determine successes and areas to be improved.

Modified from "(In)formative Assessments," Harvard Education Letter, (Rothman, 2006)

Interim assessment is positioned between formative and summative, providing predictive data about the end-of-year performance. It evaluates projects and courses to diagnose areas of strength and weakness in the

have met the course and program objectives. Evaluation methods and measures should be varied and responsive, meaning they should be easily adaptable or flexible in order to achieve a

comprehensive picture of successes and deficiencies.

It is most common for programs to have established summative assessment methods already in place. However, it is vital to measure and document at the formative and interim stages as well. In all likelihood we are evaluating at all three junctures, but not necessarily formalizing the formative and interim evidence for review. When faculty record what we already do in the studio classroom, we create an efficient platform for assessment data collection.

Too Much Data is Too Much Data

Data should serve the user, not the other way around. An ideal assessment scenario is one that generates exactly enough data that is focused on informing positive change in the learning community. As such, efficient assessment should state measurable goals and objectives in order to target and gather specific data and evidence to be interpreted and analyzed. This limits the information collected and narrows the focus on more applicable results. Once the results are summarized they should be shared and archived to support an assessment plan. An effective assessment plan is only as good as the methods that are used to implement and archive it — controlling the data stream and asking the administration to commit funding to archive the data collected is one way to accomplish this task. This will provide ready access to concrete data and will serve to confirm — historically — that stated objectives and outcomes are in fact being achieved.

Assessment as Mentoring

The intent with any academic assessment, formal or otherwise, is to inform the process of improving and expanding a student's creative practice. As such, can we rebrand assessment as "mentoring"? This would reframe assessment as an exchange of advice, experience and discipline between instructor and student, students and their peers, or even between faculty members. Establishing mentoring as a viable form of assessment will remove many of the negative connotations that surround evaluative practices.

A good way to revolutionize how we measure success is to build in time for failure during class projects and exercises. Failure expands a student's range of understanding process development and can fuel curiosity. Potentially, it encourages students to take risks and acknowledge that art making is difficult. Most art and design educators will agree that failure is inherently linked with success; however, time, budget, program objectives and most mission statements do not quantifiably value failure. As such, we need to do more than say we value risk and failure in higher education; it needs to be imbedded in our assignments, our rubrics and eventually be taken into account by the larger institution. Faculty must lead by example through mentoring, ultimately helping students separate the ego from the outcome.

Success can be evolutionary. Higher education in the arts should prepare students for the realities of life after college by offering a comprehensive education that goes beyond basic job placement. We are not just creating

employees, but nurturing citizens: ideally happy, healthy and curious citizens. Mentoring, a likely part of most teaching practices, does this by building trust through interpersonal relationships that encourage self-awareness (Campbell and Campbell, 728). Through mentoring we have the ability to evaluate and track the nuances of our students. Mentoring enables an affective dimension to assessment. When paired with testing, rubrics and other forms of evaluation, it can foster an enduring relationship with students, one that cultivates their intangible skills, and students experience a model for a lifelong commitment to practicing in the arts.

This mentored preparation holds students accountable by encouraging mutual respect. Beyond this relationship, though, there are other constituents that share ideas about models for success. Many parents, students and administrators interpret success — during and after college — to mean good grades, graduating in four years, career, money and newsworthy alumni. As significant as these milestones are, the soft skills and ethical concepts needed to reach these goals are often neglected. Through mentoring, faculty should prioritize their efforts "to respect students as colleagues and thus to encourage the sharing of ideas, experiences, and ethics" (Holzer, 3). Skills like creativity, discipline, empathy, curiosity, risk-taking and wellness can be modeled by mentor-based instruction and assessed through routine critique. These skills become the evidence of a process; they are indicators of success for the instructor, who facilitates the mentoring relationship. Job marketability and financial success is dependent on these difficult to

assess skill sets. As instructors, we must use both tangible and intangible markers to help grow a well-rounded, self-motivated citizen.

Sharing the Load

Mentoring creates trust. Students digest formal and informal criticism more easily under the umbrella of mentoring. Likewise, peers can be a student's best critics, sharing the mentoring load with the instructor. Regular peer assessment through collaboration and critique encourages a continuous and honest dialogue. This dialogue may produce more questions than answers, however. Yet through mentoring we can show students that we are willing to re-search these questions, thereby illustrating the value of risk and failure in a creative practice. In short, we need to share these vulnerabilities with our students.

Shifting some responsibilities to students will empower them to take control of their education. The students themselves can lead critiques, but this requires the professor sharing the reins. Many critique models place the faculty as an observer during the critique, as opposed to being the primary contributor. Guided by the instructor, students can also help to develop projects and corresponding rubrics if given the platform to do so. When students become part of the evaluative process it ensures that they completely understand what is required of them. Transparency in how we educate, not just what we educate, is paramount. These tactics will help students develop positive habits and discipline, leading to a confident and fulfilling studio/design practice.

Conclusion

Assessment is an attempt to quantify and literalize the learning (and, by implication, the teaching) that happens within an academic setting. Historically, the task of developing objective measurements for the inherently subjective nature of art is counterintuitive and generally loathed by all directly involved in the process. In order to reshape this attitude and develop healthy assessment practices, support from the full spectrum of academic participants must involve students, professors, foundations programs, administration, and the institution at large. One of the most cogent and base level forms of assessment takes place between the professor and his or her student. Through effective communication, the success of this interaction may be evaluated from individual experiences and peer dynamics. The efficacy of communication may be observed in a student's artistic process.

In the interest of avoiding data overload, many of the less formal or individual interactions can go unnoticed and undocumented; they should still be recognized as assessment. When documented appropriately these instances can contribute to the professional narrative that unfolds during faculty evaluations, annual reviews, student evaluations, program reviews, and more. This is the exponential effect of assessment, meaning that the documentation of a minor exchange between faculty and student can lay the groundwork for a more formal examination of a concentration, program, or even a college. Limiting and focusing the data can help minimize anxiety about and/or indifference toward the evaluation process. It also

manages the results thereby preventing assessment data from growing out of control or telling a story contrary to the lived experience of the classroom.

Considering the potentially exponential results of assessment, our task as educators is to remain focused on the individual, which will inevitably produce mentored results. Therefore, through our pedagogy and mentoring, we work with students to realize that they are not aiming for a breakthrough that will suddenly end their efforts or become a token for them to parade about. Instead, we want them to learn to practice, to work, and that their efforts do not terminate at some arbitrary end point, like turning in a project, finishing a course, or earning a degree. Instead they are training themselves for a life that blurs the boundaries between labor and play. They may produce an object or a physical image, yes, but they must learn that each product they create is helping them to develop a practice that is ongoing, dynamic, and malleable. The practice is a process, always evolving, and their experience in higher education should be viewed as the beginning, not the end of their education.

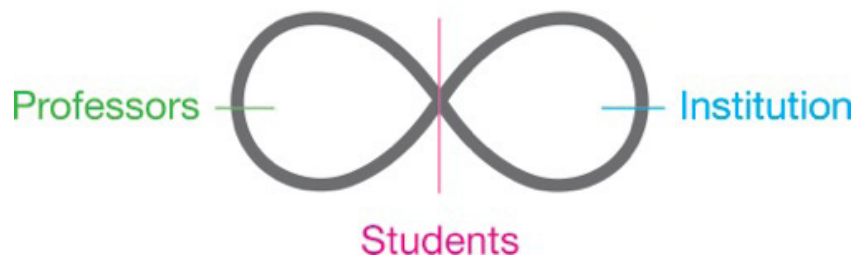
Our teaching is also a practice where we must hold ourselves to the same standards we expect of our students. We must continue to evaluate our methods of assessment through critiques and rubrics to determine their responsiveness to our students, administrators, and institutions. As instructors we assess what has happened compared with what will, could, or should happen in the future. When evaluating methods of assessment, consider what rubrics are designed to measure. Do they measure positive

and soft skills gained, the process of development, technical prowess or conceptual successes, or do they measure the opposite, noting the negatives? How does this model implicate your students? Consider ways to evaluate what has been earned rather than what is deficient.

As professionals we should trust ourselves with criticism and model this form of assessment for our institutional counterparts. An institution's values are apparent in the life and culture of the students, the interests and research of the administrators and professors, the everyday workings of the staff, and in the mission statement. These values should be reflected not only through course content, but also in the transformative ways that we evaluate this content.

Assessment produces numbers that represent individuals; do not lose sight of the individual when analyzing the whole. Through mentoring and through interpersonal relationships with our students, colleagues, and administrators we can invest in the individual. The students are at the center of the model for assessment, with the faculty and the institution at the periphery of the feedback loop. All information gathered must be filtered through the student experience.

For a good 300 years, art has been a part of higher education, yet we are continually trying to legitimize its place as a serious academic discipline. Being a part of the formal development of assessment strategies is another attempt to defend our rightful place at the table. It also positions us to safeguard against external pressures that could destroy the



integrity of our discipline. Professors must serve an active role in the design and implementation of assessment as it pertains to the larger components of an academic hierarchy. Art professors in particular have an important role in advocating for the intuitive, intangible and soft skills. We help demystify a creative practice by gathering data that can be quantified and explained, while also drawing a line in the sand to protect and harbor the aspects of the art education experience that need to remain untouched, unexplained, or purely visual. Essentially, we must establish and uphold our own standards otherwise they will be provided for us.

In Abraham Maslow's 1943 paper, "A Theory of Human Motivation," he addresses the hierarchy of human needs. This hierarchy maintains that first physiological needs such as food and shelter must be fulfilled before the needs of safety or even love, belongingness or creativity (Maslow). The environment of assessment can be navigated by following a similar hierarchy of needs. In order to simply utilize assessment we need to first be discerning and efficient. Consider the role of technology to motivate data and to manage the outcomes. Our level of productivity through assessment must first reach a balance

between the needs of our students and the needs of our administrators. Avoid unnecessary redundancy and anticipate the informative potential of your assessment activities. Only accumulate data that will affect positive change.

Once we are efficient with the process of evaluation, we can then be creative. This enables us to engage new models for assessment, explore alternative opportunities for critique, mentor, and exercise more student-centered evaluations. It stands to reason that creative endeavors necessitate innovative assessment models. With so many institutions of higher education promoting a mantra of creative and critical thinking at their cores, we are primed to be the model. We should be the model. As art and design educators, we have been doing it this way all along.

Creativity will inevitably lead to radical motivations, thoughts and outcomes. By radically addressing assessment, new practices will develop. In Paul Thek's "Teaching Notes: 4-Dimensional Design," he concludes with a message to his students stating that the evaluations they receive in this course will not affect their lives, but his reactions and the reactions of their peers will, "as you relate to your present, you will relate to your future,

recognize your weakness and do something about it" (Thek, 80). When it comes to assessment, relate to your present as a creative educator and art worker: be efficient, creative and radical.

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1 > Critique, Assessment, and Rubrics: Measuring Success Assignment External Assessment Rubric

Objectives

This rubric is designed for evaluators outside of your institution (e.g. jurors or college recruiters who may be reviewing groups of student work.) to direct their attention towards your program's outcomes encouraging them to give honest revelatory feedback.

Strategy

Based on the scale below, rate the student work that you've observed, and briefly describe why you've chosen this rating.

1 Excellent **2** Good **3** Average **4** Below Average **5** Not at all

Does the Student

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Demonstrate knowledge of the visual elements and principles of design?	1	2	3	4	5
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.....

Utilize a variety of media and technical approaches within each class?	1	2	3	4	5
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Demonstrate a strong grasp of the process of creating a work of art from conception to completion?	1	2	3	4	5
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Demonstrate observational skills?	1	2	3	4	5
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Have the ability to discuss, analyze, and interpret their work?	1	2	3	4	5
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.....

Have a firm grasp of art vocabulary?	1	2	3	4	5
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.....

Have an art historical, social, or political context for the work that they are producing?	1	2	3	4	5
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.....

Do the Assignments

Allow and encourage self-expression?	1	2	3	4	5
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Explore art and design fundamentals that will be relevant in the contemporary art world?	1	2	3	4	5
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1 > Critique, Assessment, and Rubrics: Measuring Success Assignment External Assessment Rubric (continued)

Additional Short Answer Questions

1. Judging from your experience with other art foundational student work, are there any broad generalizations you can make about the student work you've seen from this program?
2. Are our students doing something particularly well? What can our students stand to improve?
3. What do you feel is insufficiently, or not at all, being addressed as evidenced by the types of projects the students are producing?

Assignment Author

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Erin Hoffman is a full-time tenured art instructor at Muskegon Community College in Michigan. She received a BFA from the University of Northern Iowa and an MFA from the University of Georgia, both in printmaking. Her work combines various printmaking techniques with hand drawn and painted elements and is intended to examine contemporary society through the lens of American history.

2 > Critique, Assessment, and Rubrics: Measuring Success Assignment Writing Exercise Week One: Learning Lists + Self Assessment

Problem

By engaging in critical thinking and self assessment, students will complete an introductory writing exercise that will be revisited at mid-term to further assess artistic growth.

Objectives/Assessment Targets

Following this assignment, students will:

- have a basic understanding of self-assessment and reflective writing.
- have a more focused understanding of artistic strengths and weaknesses.
- have the ability to honestly reflect on and acknowledge fears of being evaluated and being an art student.

Materials

Pen/paper or laptop/printer

Strategy

Using the prompts provided, students will have the opportunity to assess where they are artistically at the beginning of the semester and begin cultivating the habit of self-evaluation. Students will quietly complete this exercise in the studio with the option of sharing their writing in small groups. This could be a helpful way to begin a dialogue about artistic habits.

Key Questions

1. List five things you are excited about learning/doing/making in this course.
2. List five things that scare you about this course or program.
3. How do you think your artwork should be evaluated/graded in this course?
4. What are your artistic strengths and your weaknesses?
5. Describe an artwork you are really PROUD of, and tell me WHY you are proud of it
6. Write a 1-3 paragraph letter to your future self-yourself at mid-semester.

Critique Strategy

Student and educator, in a one-on-one meeting, will assess development at mid-term and/or at the end of the semester.

Timetable

This writing exercise will be completed by the end of the first week and will be revisited (filled out by the student a second time).

Assignment Author

Valerie Powell, Sam Houston State University, wash@shsu.edu. Valerie Powell is deeply invested in contemporary scholarship surrounding foundations pedagogy and currently serves on the national board of FATE [Foundations in Art: Theory and Practice] as Vice President of Regional Coordinators. She has serious fun teaching, coordinating and developing experimental and immersive curriculum in the WASH {Workshop in Art Studio + History} Foundations Program. To learn more about WASH please visit: shsuWASH.com

3 > Critique, Assessment, and Rubrics: Measuring Success Assignment (Follow Up) Learning Lists + Self-Assessment: Your Personal Rubric

Problem

During the first week of class students draft a letter to themselves focusing on course goals, artistic strengths and weaknesses, fears and/or questions they may have. After collecting the initial letter, create a personalized rubric based off of each letter that addresses the goals, fears and questions expressed by individual students. The exchange encourages critical thinking, accountability and self-reflection at the onset of the course. The resulting rubric can then be utilized (filled out) by students at mid-term and potentially again at the end of the course.

Objectives/Assessment Targets

Following this assignment, students will:

- have developed individual standards of success, and hold themselves accountable to their goals.
- understand that they are *heard* in this process of rubric exchange, receiving individual attention from their instructor.
- be able to document how their own priorities change as they gain knowledge and confidence.
- understand their fears with regard to their capacities as artists, which will help encourage failure as part of a creative practice.

Strategy

Create a universal rubric template that is flexible enough for separate responses to each student letter. Consider what some common categories may be while at the same time leaving plenty of space to individualize the rubric. Avoid academic jargon and number based measurements like 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Instead, use more descriptive language like *needs improvement, improved, much improved* and so forth.

Sample

Based off your class goals and concerns in the Letter to Yourself, I created the following rubric as an evaluation method for you to review your own progress. Please keep this personalized rubric for use at mid-term to better evaluate your own progress according to the goals you outlined. You mentioned that you did not like speaking in front of others and were afraid you would be marked down for lack of participation. You stated your desire to use more tools and new materials, but had some anxiety. Your letter was also very well drafted; it will be nice to see you write more regarding your projects.

Participation in critiques	Poor	Fair	Above	Average	Excellent
Adventuresome-ness with new materials	Poor	Fair	Above	Average	Excellent
Willingness to take risks	Poor	Fair	Above	Average	Excellent
Quality of class writing	Poor	Fair	Above	Average	Excellent
Use of power tools	Poor	Fair	Above	Average	Excellent

Evaluation

Students should be given class credit for completing the rubric thoroughly. However, it is important to assess the rubric in a pass/fail method. This ensures students provide honest responses to the goals outlined in the initial letter.

3 > Critique, Assessment, and Rubrics: Measuring Success Assignment (Follow Up) Learning Lists + Self-Assessment: Your Personal Rubric (continued)

Materials

2-3 photocopies of each personalized rubric handed back to students OR provide students an electronic version to access via email, Google docs, etc.

Timetable

Evaluate and hand back the letters with the responding rubric quickly. This lets students know the instructor is watching and listening early on in the course. The completed rubric can be recollected from students whenever it seems most relevant throughout the semester. The commonalities between each letter and rubric may generate some good class discussions, so build in a little time to talk about the rubric process.

Assignment Author

Melissa Vandenberg, Eastern Kentucky University, melissa.vandenberg@eku.edu (www.melissavandenberg.com).

Born in Detroit, Melissa Vandenberg is a multidisciplinary artist, educator and curator living in eastern Kentucky. Her studio practice explores patriotism, impermanence and fear using everyday materials. She received a BFA from College for Creative Studies in Detroit and an MFA from Southern Illinois University. She exhibits nationally and has received numerous grants including a Kentucky Foundation for Women Enrichment Grant.

4 > Critique, Assessment, and Rubrics: Measuring Success Assignment Bad Art: A Subjective Mission

Pre-Project Discussion

Prior to introducing this project the class should have a short discussion about what makes art bad. Break the class into small groups to quickly weigh the qualities of bad art. Have the class regroup to record their findings on the board. Compare results and consider any potential consensus. Many students struggle with the objective properties of what they think is an entirely subjective topic; that is, making art. When discussing the negative attributes of making art, discussions may prove lively, opinions varied and debate energetic. Pull together a vocabulary list based on the class discussion and let students lead the subsequent project.

Problem

Students will create a bad work of art. Bad may be defined in one or more ways using the initial class discussion as a point of departure. (Modify project parameters as needed; create a bad drawing, bad design, bad sculpture, etc.)

Strategy

In media of your choosing, make a bad work of art. Your creation may be intentionally ugly, repulsive, offensive, contrived, controversial, cliché, untimely, kitsch, derivative, poorly crafted or any mixture of the aforementioned descriptors. Abandon your ego along with the formal elements of art and design. Attempt to create the unexpected. Communicate badness with smart choices of media, topic and style. To take full advantage of the project, take risks and fail.

Continue brainstorming and recording more thoughts on “bad” in your journal. Come up with three project options and discuss your ideas with the professor and/or classmates. Select the strongest “bad” concept and proceed.

Resources and/or examples include:

- Thomas Kinkade, Jeff Koons, Damien Hirst, Van Gogh, Jackson Pollack, Marcel Duchamp, Salon des Refusés, Impressionists, Deviant Art, Degenerate Art, Robert Crumb, Robert Mapplethorpe, and Ed Hardy.
- <http://www.economist.com/blogs/freeexchange/2013/08/behavioural-economics>
- <http://hyperallergic.com/59354/should-museums-exhibit-bad-art/>
- <http://www.nytimes.com/1999/01/24/magazine/in-praise-of-bad-art.html>

Key Questions

1. Is bad defined by media, craft, style and/or topic?
2. What is appropriate craft? What is subjective versus objective? Can bad art become good?
3. How is bad art graded, when bad is the goal? Is it possible to fail at making something bad? How is failure defined?

Critique Strategy

Prior to the critique period, break the students into small groups to create short rubrics for evaluating the projects. It is beneficial to provide a sample rubric or even a blank rubric – with places for students to fill in their own evaluative categories. The resulting rubrics can be shared through critique and even used to actualize a final grade.

Timetable

No more than 1 – 2 weeks or as extra credit.

4 > Critique, Assessment, and Rubrics: Measuring Success Assignment Bad Art: A Subjective Mission (continued)

Objectives/Assessment Targets

Following this assignment, students will:

- have developed relevant skills in critical thinking
- have developed relevant skills in expressing ideas, whether verbally or in writing
- have developed skills in subjective and objective observation and analysis
- have developed new or revised understanding of relevant vocabulary (including: aesthetics, kitsch, derivative, cliché, craft, objective, subjective, abject, milieu, and contextual)

Materials

Open, and potentially for free.

Assignment Author

Melissa Vandenberg, Eastern Kentucky University, melissa.vandenberg@eku.edu (www.melissavandenberg.com).

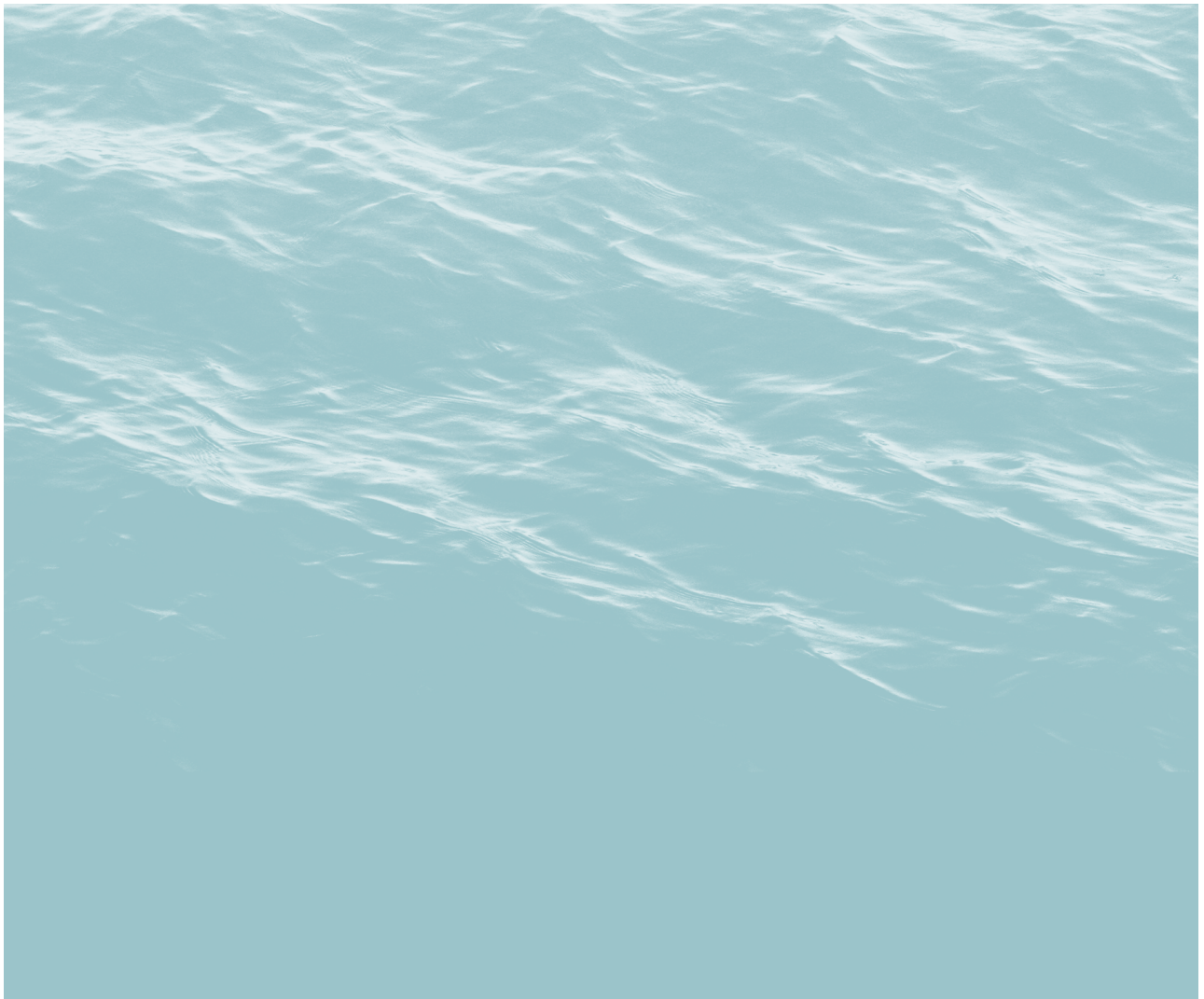
Born in Detroit, Melissa Vandenberg is a multidisciplinary artist, educator and curator living in eastern Kentucky. Her studio practice explores patriotism, impermanence and fear using everyday materials. She received a BFA from College for Creative Studies in Detroit and an MFA from Southern Illinois University. She exhibits nationally and has received numerous grants including a Kentucky Foundation for Women Enrichment Grant.

Visual Quantitative Reasoning: Introducing Research with Technology

Authors:

Rebecca Williams, University of Georgia

Richard Siegesmund, Northern Illinois University



In art and design foundations programs, students often learn technology to support expressive and communicative outcomes. However, an introduction to the visual arts needs to be more than training in the craft and skill of visual expression; it should also include an introduction to the assembling, sorting, and analysis of visual data. Beyond learning to synthesize and express the visual and numeric information saturating our world, students need to learn to manage and analyze it. Here, digital technology tools are an indispensable partner for new forms of visual management.

Visual cognitive graphics (Tufte, 1983; McCandless, 2009) is an emerging field that complements the fields of visual expression and communication. In the Lamar Dodd School of Art at the University of Georgia, ARTS 2100 (Strategic Visual Thinking) applies educational technology to allow students to engage in data collection, visual analysis, and interpretation. In this course, the Google Drive™ office suite programs, Google Forms and Google Sheets, were originally used for data collection and analysis. Google Forms is also now used to develop online surveys, which students can distribute widely across the Internet. As participants complete the survey, their responses are automatically inputted into Google Sheets. Google Sheets, however, became an unreliable tool

for data analysis due to the large amounts of data students generated through their surveys. Students now download the spreadsheet generated from the Google Form as a Microsoft Excel® document to complete their data analysis. Next, students craft cognitive graphics in Illustrator®. Throughout the course, there is a continuing emphasis on the role of the visual arts in decision-making—not just in contemporary society but also through historical examples of visual cognitive graphics from the 19th and 20th centuries.

The compelling reason for students to take the course is it meets the Quantitative Reasoning requirement within the University's undergraduate General Education Core Curriculum

requirements. It is not a part of the School of Art's foundations sequence. Therefore, an art student may elect to take ARTS 2100 within the School of Art, instead of (for example) statistics in the Department of Mathematics. Thus, rather than arguing over what gets included or excluded from the foundations curriculum, ARTS 2100 can carve out new time available for studio work in a student's overall curriculum. Therefore, an effective approach to expanding the opportunities for what visual art and design students have the opportunity to study in first-year programs is to look to the General Education requirements and imagine new arts-based courses that address themes of quantitative analysis, research, cultural study, or critical thinking.

However, one does not necessarily need to think of the content of ARTS 2100 as a dedicated semester-long course. Aspects of this curriculum could be modularized and introduced within an existing course.

ARTS 2100 is the only approved course in the visual and performing arts that meets the University's Quantitative Reasoning requirement. It does so by addressing eight mandated objectives. The course demonstrates students meaningfully engaging in the following abilities as set forth by the Regents of the University of Georgia System:

1. Ability to model situations from a variety of settings in generalized mathematical forms.
2. Ability to express and manipulate mathematical information, concepts, and thoughts in verbal, numeric, graphical, and symbolic form while solving a variety of problems.
3. Ability to solve multiple-step problems through different modes of reasoning (inductive, deductive, and symbolic).
4. Ability to properly use appropriate technology in the evaluation, analysis, and synthesis of information in problem-solving situations.
5. Ability to shift among the verbal, numeric, graphical, and symbolic modes of considering relationships.
6. Ability to extract quantitative data

from a given situation, translate the data into information in various modes, evaluate the information, abstract essential information, make logical deductions, and arrive at reasonable conclusions.

7. Ability to employ quantitative reasoning appropriately while applying scientific methodology to explore nature and the universe.
8. Ability to discern the impact of quantitative reasoning and mathematics on the sciences, society, and one's personal life. (University of Georgia, 2010)

Students use digital technology to meet each of these goals by applying a combination of the disciplines of graphic design, statistics, and social science research methods. Since a full discussion of the central role of technology in teaching ARTS 2100 is beyond the scope of this article, we wish to focus on the first design project of the course, one that visual artists and designers, who do not have special training in statistics or survey research methods, could confidently teach. It is also a project common to many foundations programs: a self-portrait, only in this case the students need to reflect on their lives by envisioning it as interacting data streams. To provide some background on the conceptual framework for this lesson, we will first introduce cognitive visual graphics. Second, we address pedagogical problems we faced when teaching with technology that was unfamiliar to us. Finally, we close with a close examination of the Self Portrait Project.

Conceptual Framework

The emerging field of cognitive visual graphics offers an intriguing intersection of social science research skills, mathematical computations, and visual design skills. Edward Tufte, now Professor Emeritus of Statistics at Yale University, laid out the foundations for this discipline in *The Visual Display of Quantitative Information* (1983). Tufte distinguished between two forms of graphic design: cognitive visual graphics presenting complex, intersecting sets of data for analysis and decision making, and stylistic design, which lures viewers through its attractiveness into a pre-determined decision. Cognitive graphics offer choices to consider; stylistic design is directive, telling people what to do. As a statistician, Tufte argued that numbers have become so complex very few people actually can comprehend what they mean and thus, rather than providing context for a rational argument around difficult issues, statistics now perniciously serve to exclude people from participating in debate. In Tufte's view, oftentimes people who present themselves as statistical experts have reduced numbers to rhetorical tools for closing discussion, rather than using them as a catalyst for robust dialogue. Tufte considered this development bad for decision-making and impoverishing to civic discourse through silencing dissent. Thus, cognitive graphics are a necessary new development to open public colloquy around complex issues.

Tufte contended that well-executed visualizations show how the quantitative weights of data sets (understood as forces) interact. Instead of reporting significance, visual displays of

information allow decision makers to consider the interaction of variables that, through an accurate visual presentation, allow the immediate and intuitive grasping of meaning and potential. Through numerous contemporary and historic examples, Tufte showed how reasonable people could significantly understand quality visual presentations in a matter of seconds. Visualizations that thoughtfully show the interactions of the quantities numbers represent provide inferential evidence through which individuals can compare and contrast interpretations. By opening conversations, there is a greater possibility for an informed consensus on problems. Therefore, we can construct thoughtful decisions through quantitative visual reasoning that engages strategic understanding of intricate interactions.

For this work, it is important for students to prepare graphics that allow accurate representation of quantitative mass, quantitative change in time, and the effects of overlapping and aggregate effects. Illustrator is commonly viewed as industry standard for creating vector images. Students must render exacting shapes and symbols that visually convey intricate levels of intended meaning. While we use Illustrator for its precision and because our students have access to it in non-class hours at university computing facilities, other options – including open source software – are available. Students learn how to use technology to visually explain complex factors that contribute to a problem. While play and experimentation have a role in brainstorming possible ways of shaping information, visual cognitive graphics demand that outcomes have clear invested meaning.

The Challenges of Teaching

While we as art educators have training in principles of graphic display and social science research methods, neither of us came to ARTS 2100 with a working knowledge of Illustrator. Therefore, we could not teach Illustrator in the traditional way: as the sage on the stage ready to answer any question students might have. Instead, we began by analyzing what essential skills in Illustrator students needed to successfully craft cognitive graphics. These included how to create new files, navigate the interface, utilize modifier keys, incorporate rulers and guides, and use the following tools: selection, zoom, shape, shape builder, fill and stroke.

Second, we turned to ADOBE® TV and YouTube™ for instructional clips demonstrating these tasks. Students explored select instructional clips as a group and then reinforced the new skills by completing a small project in Illustrator, developing a business card that communicated their personality type. This project also served as a jumping off point for the Self-Portrait Project. Students began by taking an online Jung Typology Test, which assessed their personality type. Then students created a printed document with two, three and a half inch wide by two-inch high artboards, and added guides to create a one-eighth inch border on each artboard. The first artboard contained the student's name, personality type, a background color, and a spirit animal. Using the Shape Builder tool, students created a spirit animal (a symbolic representative of their personality) by merging or erasing simple shapes that they layered. Mastery of this tool was vital because it would function as a key

building block for their future projects. The second artboard was comprised of the percentages of their personality type, a brief explanation of their spirit animal, and a background color.

Third, students made use of their problem solving skills, print and digital resources, and classmate expertise as they progressed through developing cognitive graphics in Illustrator. We, the teachers, often did not have the answer. As co-learners, teachers and students needed to figure this out together: learning alongside our students, and mentoring them through their navigation of creative problems that arose during their work in Illustrator. This style of teaching also means recalibrating how one might think about the assessment of student work. Instead of looking for mastery of a pre-specified range of technical skills, we looked for the degree students have thoughtfully engaged the project and found visual solutions.

While a course in visualization allows multiple disciplines to come together, at the same time it requires instructors of record to either have multiple disciplinary skill sets or the ability to appropriate into their instruction the variable sources of expertise that the students need. Professor as bricoleur (Gude, 2013)—as used in the arts to indicate someone who borrows from disparate elements to create something novel—is a new approach to both the training of academics and expectations for teaching. However, the curricular and pedagogical skills the instructor needs to teach correspond to the skills students must also employ. Teacher and students engage the problem of learning together.

Megan Dupre Life Map

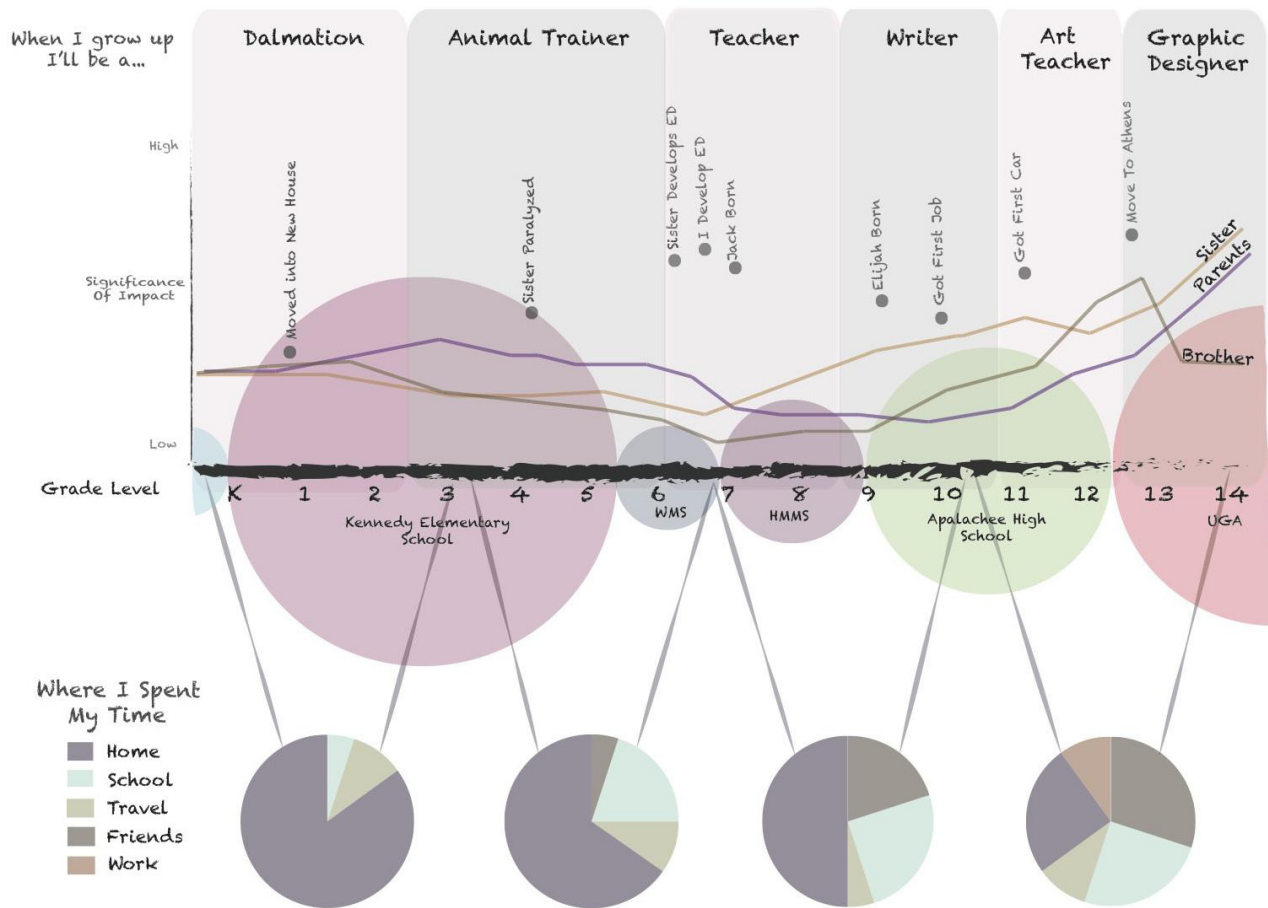


Figure 1. Life Map by Megan Dupre (2012)

Self-Portrait Project

For the midterm project of ARTS 2100, students develop a cognitive map of their lives to date. Students must seek to visually communicate how various factors (like conditions, events, experiences, or people) have shaped their personal journey. To

complete such a task, students must be able to thematize major factors in their lives that have shaped who they have become. It is often challenging for students to recognize life events as first possessing shared qualities, then group these related qualities in a data stream, and finally distinguish

between major life decision points and random remembered events. Therefore, students are encouraged to share their individual initial brainstorming with the class in order to broaden their thinking. Possible data streams include: year, school, location, key events, influential people, romance,

religion, philosophy, course of study, aspirations, set-backs, health issues, etc. Any of these data streams may have critical decision points. A check for these basic understandings is necessary before entering the construction stage.

The constructive stage allows students to make visual interpretations. Figure 1 shows how one student, Megan Dupre, metaphorically applies weights and measures to her life. Students need to be reflective and critical to quantify interpersonal relationships or psychological states—things not inherently numeric into quantitative representation.

Students must assess the shifting preponderance of their different data streams over time and imagine how to visualize this flux. There is no single right way to do this. Students were encouraged to develop multiple ways to visualize each of their factors, and then they worked in small groups to critique each design and discussed how these designs could come together in the final life map. The key is what communicates an idea, not what looks interesting or novel.

In Figure 1, Megan (Dupre, 2012) began with a straightforward spine through the center of her design: a simple time line by grade level. Circles visualize the portion of her life spent in each school she attended and rectangles designate her desired profession over time. Lines track the impact of her sister, parents, brother, and major life events throughout her life. Finally, pie charts show how home, school, travel, friends, and work occupied her time. Note here the sophisticated natural color palette

Liza Dorsey's Life Map: A look into Life Events, Art, Music and Happiness

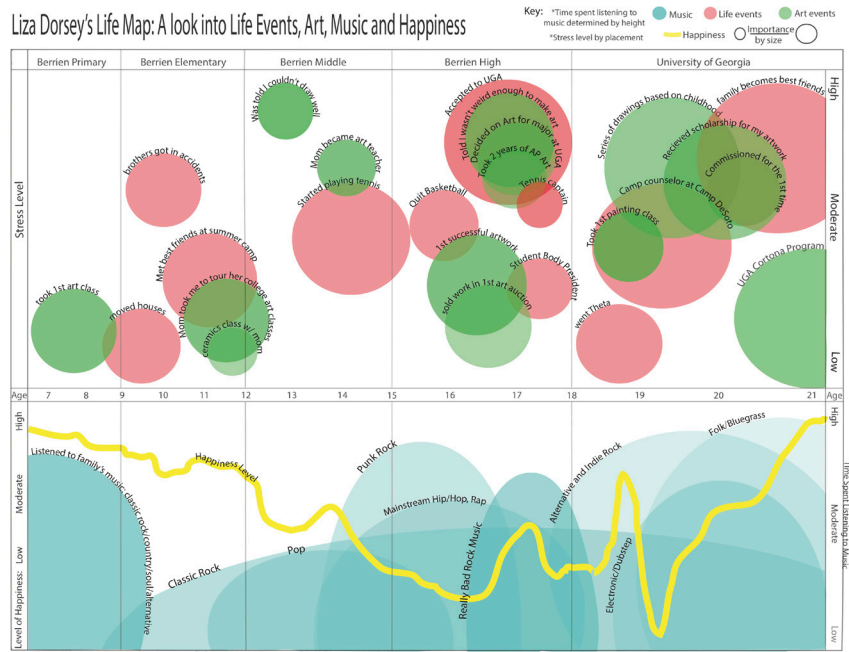


Figure 2. Life Map by Liza (Dorsey, 2012)

she has selected allowing the viewer to see all of this as an integrated whole. This allows the viewer time to stay with the image, extract information, and consider the stories that are unfolding.

In Figure 2, a second student, Liza Dorsey (2012), presents another way of representing interacting data streams. Here two interacting data streams are music preference and happiness level. Using transparent levels of color representing the music she is listening to, Liza helps communicate the complexity of her life, while the happiness level interacts with musical genres allowing us to understand her imaginatively. The emerging whole is more than the sum of the parts. For example, note how she reports the sharp decline in happiness at age 19. Something happened, and Liza simply presents

the data. The viewer needs to assemble the evidence and build an inferential interpretation. There is no right answer; multiple interpretations are possible. Perhaps after joining a campus sorority (the event, Went Theta), she became involved in the partying atmosphere of Greek life. Perhaps her growing involvement with a mixture of Indie Rock and Electronic Dubstep music signals a toxic mix of sub-cultures. Perhaps, the incongruous clash of sorority culture (tracked in a third data stream), Indie Music, and Electronic Dubstep caused some kind of existential crisis. Further exploration of the chart, provides additional clues surrounding this time, and the complexity of interpretative possibilities increases. The evidence provided activates inferential reasoning.

Conclusion

All students entering college will need an introduction to visual tools to think about and discuss intersecting streams of information. Such learning requires transmediation: turning data into images and interpreting images back into quantitative understanding. These are not special skills for art and design professionals; these forms of quantitative visual literacy are transdisciplinary and fundamental to functioning in present day society. ARTS 2100 addresses these problems through a stand-alone course, but these concerns can be introduced in any foundations structure through an individual project like the self-portrait lesson. This is necessary for the skills of learning to collect data, visualize, and analyze it are life skills that visual arts teaches. Today's society demands understanding dynamic quantitative visualization. This will be critical in order to explain data in business or civic situations and will be a core competency for contemporary citizens.

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Authors

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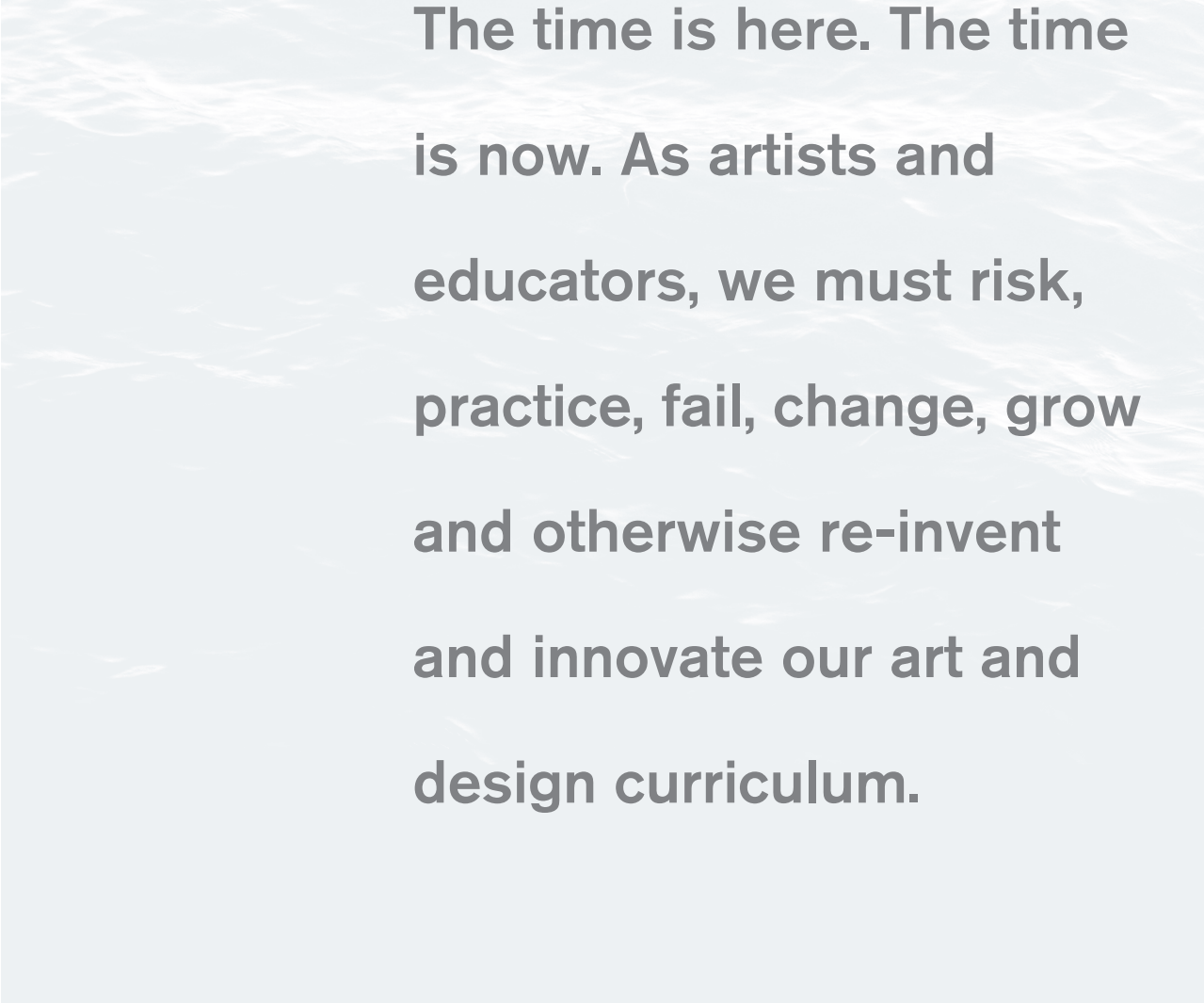
Scholar, and serves as a Visiting Fellow to the Research Institute of the National College of Art and Design in Dublin, Ireland. His publications include *Arts-Based Research in Education: Foundations for Practice*.



Afterword

Rae Goodwin

It is time to fail-forward.



The time is here. The time is now. As artists and educators, we must risk, practice, fail, change, grow and otherwise re-invent and innovate our art and design curriculum.

We must live in the question to know what answers our students will claim as their own. Their answers are their ways of understanding the world through making. We must see our students as whole people with whole lives who are living their “real-life” now. We must maintain our rigorous standards in process and production. We must define our expectations of process and production and evaluate both.

Gone are the days when irrelevant exercises were worthy of our time. Gone are the days when students were motivated to work without creative options.

Gone are the days when creative and curious students blindly followed our lead through a morass of unidentified markers and objectives that will ultimately mean little in their creative lives.

I have worked in arts education for over 20 years and my mission has always been to empower individuals through creative expression. However, it was not until I was a fellow at ThinkTank5 that I truly became conscious of my teaching. I now evaluate my approach to working with students in every class session. This

kind of responsive curriculum encourages risk and supports failure in both the students' and instructor's work. When students experience deep learning they will fail. In order gain a depth and breath of knowledge we all must fail. As a teacher I fail on a regular basis and announce these failures to my students to ask them to help me to improve. This kind of failure is not about defeat, but rather about moving or propelling oneself forward. To bring about a new era, we must ourselves learn and indeed teach our students to fail-forward.

To fail-forward means that we can catch ourselves. To fail-forward means we are risking with an eye to the future while living in the present. To fail-forward means that we are looking at our students and moving our curriculum to a place that enables their success, motivation, and curiosity. Failing-forward means questioning the relevance of everything we have done and are doing with our students in art and design. Failing-forward means asking one another for help to unravel our current and past experiences as educators and re-invent and innovate within our curriculum.

Rae Goodwin (rae.goodwin@uky.edu) is president of Integrative Teaching International (ITI) and Director of Studio Foundations in the School of Art and Visual Studies at the University of Kentucky.

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ART 133-03: 3D STUDIES

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Blogging Your Design Process



blog bläg/
noun: **blog**;
plural noun: **blogs**
1. a personal website or web page on which an individual records opinions, links to other sites, etc. on a regular basis. Origin 1990s: shortening of weblog.

RATIONALE:

As an artist, it is vitally important that you connect with others. Nearly every artist keeps a sketchbook or a record of some sort. A blog is a kind of *hyper-sketchbook*--an interconnected portal through which you may record and develop ideas, collect and share inspiring information images, etc. Through blogging, you will generate a record of your hard work and make that record available to your friends, family, potential clients, galleries, a creative community and the universe at large. Additionally, keeping a blog will provide an easy way for me (and others) to evaluate and appreciate aspects of your design process and thinking that may otherwise be invisible in the final products of your art works. Reasons to blog:

- Build your web presence as a working artist and present yourself professionally
- Improve your writing and critical thinking skills
- Create a searchable trove of influences, works and ideas
- Connect with others and keep yourself engaged with a creative community
- Develop self-discipline through writing and cataloging your art processes and influences on an ongoing basis

SETTING UP YOUR BLOG:

If you do not already have a blog, create one using www.wordpress.com or www.weebly.com. (or www.blogger.com if you must but no Tumblr) and post your URL with a hyperlink to blackboard. Your blog must include the following features:

- Pages including an "About Me" or "Bio" page
- Archive widget containing all your previous posts
- Categories widget that organizes posts by categories (ex. My Work, Exhibitions, Influences & Inspiration, etc.)
- Tags (include at least two per post). Tags are similar to categories but can be more or less specific. A post containing a review of an art exhibition of Picasso works at the Cincinnati Art Museum might have tags like: review, exhibition, artist Picasso, printmaking, abstraction, etc.
- Hyperlinks and images in posts. Most posts should contain both images and hyperlinks (links to other websites).

Optionally, you may wish to expand your blog to include a portfolio page, effectively turning it into your website. You may also wish to connect your blog with your social platforms (ex. Instagram, Pinterest, Flickr, Facebook, et al), particularly platforms that inform or display your creative work.



Winter Uniform, from [Andrea Zittel's Blog](#)

BLOGGING SCHEDULE

BEFORE WED JAN 23:

Set up your blog, make your first post and create an about me page. Your first post should include images and/or a video that relates to your research for your first project. Your about me page should include the answers to these questions:

- Where are you from?
- What is your medium (what kind of art are you interested in making?)
- What are your ultimate goals as an artist?

ONGOING:

You should create at least two blog post for each project this semester. The first post is due by the next class meeting after the project has been introduced. The second post is due by the next class meeting after the critique (if a critique is Monday at noon, the post containing the reflection/statement should be made by Wednesday at noon). Between them, these two posts must include:

- Information about your design process including any initial ideas and research you did, other artists that may have inspired you, and a description and/or photographs of the steps of your creative process.
- A photo or photos of your final piece.
- A statement or reflection about your final work

BEFORE MON FEB 24:

In addition to your two posts for each project, complete these three posts before Feb. 24:

1. Describe a personal experience where the sense of touch left a lasting impression. This may be a lasting experience, positive or negative. If you think of something too personal to discuss, describe another experience.
2. Describe a personal experience where your spacial perception was noticeably altered, either in a positive or negative way. Describe a situations where your sense of space was visually challenged, confused, overwhelmed, or simply unexpected. You may have found yourself filled with awe, off balance, sensory deprived, in a state of anxiety, or simply lost.
3. Visit the Cincinnati Art Museum on your own time. Identify ten works of art, each from a different period/style that you would personally like to own. For each work, include *all* the information from the title card, a short paragraph about why you find the work interest, and a photograph of the work. You may wish to browse the collection highlights online before visiting: <http://99.192.227.210/explore/collection/collections/?c=all>

DESIGN PROCESS COMPONENTS

Throughout the history of civilization there are records of artists and makers creating. While we all create in different and unique ways, most artists generate their works using this basic process. Following these steps more consciously will help you to organize your thoughts for critiques, establish better time management habits, and ultimately create stronger works of art. These are the essential steps in the design process:

1. Generate or Understand the Proposal

In an academic setting, especially in foundations courses an initial problem may be assigned rather than created by you. In either case, the steps are the same. First make sure you fully understand all aspects of the problem. This includes questions such as: What subjects should be explored? Where will your project be displayed? Who is the target audience? What are the material constraints? What research is expected? And finally, what is the available timeframe? Projects often take about twice as long as you think they will take. Plan ahead and account for this!

2. Research & Ideation

This phase includes finding references and documenting your ideas. Go to the library and find books on related subjects. Use the internet. Look at nature. Do not settle on a particular idea but ideate. Be more concerned with the quantity of your ideas than their quality. Allow your mind to wander and your body to explore. This is often the most enjoyable part of art-making. Go deeply into whatever subject you are exploring.

3. Develop & Refine

When you have collected enough resources, references and ideas it is time to select your best concepts and flesh them out. Work with several of your best ideas instead of one. As you work, your weaker ideas will naturally be abandoned. Get as much as possible out of the limitations and push the envelope. Select the strongest, most unique, innovative, and feasible idea and finish it with uncompromising, intentional focus and determination.

4. Document & Reflect

Once you have finished your piece you must describe it through text and images (or video). A statement is essential to understanding the work, and in the digital age, a photograph is essential to promoting and/or presenting it. You may need a couple days to fully articulate a written statement about what you have created. Through writing a statement or reflection, you will gain an even greater understanding of your own work. You may then use the text to explain to others aspects of your process or the content of the work. Finally you are ready to submit a photograph of the work with an application for an exhibitions, hang the work in a gallery, package it for sale, or simply give your art to a close friend who might appreciate your in-depth explorations and the results. Congratulations! You have made quality art.



**BLOG
YOUR
PROCESS**

EVALUATION

Grades for blog posts that are connected to larger assignments in this course will be included within your grade for the specific project. You will also receive an additional grade for your blog as part of your overall participation grade in the course. These are the factors I will take into consideration for grading the individual posts and the blog overall:

- Is the blog design clean and easy to read and navigate? Your blog should be free from distracting background images and garish colors.
- Is the written information professional in tone and free from errors in grammar, punctuation, syntax and spelling?
- Do the posts include discussions of creative influences? Is it clear how your own work relates to (and differs from) the work of your influences? Do posts of this kind contain embedded images or videos, including hyperlinks to more images or information about the artists you describe?
- Are images properly exposed, well lit, sharp, color balanced, cropped appropriately, with uncluttered compositions?
- Do all images contain descriptive text including artist name, the name of the work and the year?
- Do posts provide a behind-the-scenes look at your technical process and research activities?

WHY USE WORDPRESS?

Wordpress is the *content management system* (CMS) of choice for many bloggers and website designers. Did you know that *about twenty percent of the internet* runs on Wordpress? The Wordpress framework provides users with a back-end system for easily making changes to all areas of your blog or website through your own browser. Through the Wordpress control panel, you may upload images, image galleries, create and delete pages easily from the menu etc., giving you complete control of your own website and freeing you from technical burdens so you can focus on generating awesome content about your art, your ideas, and your influences.

Additionally, by using Wordpress you are the beneficiary of years of hard work of hundreds of people from all over the world who are continually updating the software to make it less vulnerable to viruses, easier to use and easier to maintain. And if in the future you wish to make major aesthetic changes to your website, you can make these changes without interfering with the content you have already generated. A good content management system like Wordpress stores the content in a database that is separate from the theme and stylesheets that effect how the site looks. If your Wordpress site or blog were a car, you would have little elves in the engine constantly fixing it up. And you can get a shiny new body anytime you want! Go Wordpress!



Yo-Auto concept car has the weirdest doors ever, from Cnet.com

FAQ's

1. What's the difference between a website and blog? The main difference between a blog and a website is chronology. While it is quite possible to use Wordpress software to create a website with static pages, most websites today have a page for news or for a blog that includes an archive of posts. In other words, blogs are often contained within websites, blurring the distinction somewhat.

2. Can't I just use my Facebook Page to build my web presence? There is no substitute for having complete creative control over your blog and/or website. Your own space online will show others that you are professional and enable others to find you more easily through searches.

3. But I already have a Tumblr blog! Why can't I just use that? Tumblr is a microblogging platform, not a blogging platform. The distinction is that content on a microblog tends to be short. While it is true that Tumblr blogs include a high volume of images--the consumption of which may be satisfying to artists and other scopophiliacs--those images often do not contain descriptive text. Nor do Tumblr blogs contain much in-depth writing or critical thinking, thumbnails or larger collections of images, static pages with engaging content, etc. In other words, microblogs usually do not include precisely the kinds of things that give blogs and websites a professional sheen. Tumblr, like any social network, can be a great addition to your arsenal if used properly. But unless your medium is the internet itself, Tumblr is simply not the proper home for your blog or website.

4. I am concerned about privacy online. Do I have to create a blog? You must participate, as this is a component to your coursework which will enable me to evaluate your assignments. You may, however, exclude your real name from your blog, effectively making all of your content completely anonymous. When the semester is over, simply delete your blog and your account.