

The Inclusion of Social Responsibility in the Visual Communications Curriculum

2008

Case Study

Submitted by:

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“There are quite a few non-profit organizations fighting over the same dollar. So [including social responsibility in the curriculum] helps the student understand how important it is to think intelligently and be good stewards of their recourses.”

Keith Bennett
Academic Director
The art Institute of Phoenix

The Art Institute of Phoenix

Synopsis from official website <www.artinstitutes.edu/phoenix>

In 1995, The Art Institute of Phoenix opened its doors and the first class of students started in January 1996. One of 35 locations of The Art Institutes located throughout North America, The Art Institute of Phoenix has grown from its original class of 45 students to more than 1200 students in fall 2003.

The Art Institute's programs include associate's and bachelor's degrees in a wide variety of design, media arts, and culinary arts programs. These programs are offered on a year-round basis, enabling students to work continuously toward their degrees. The faculty, many of whom are working professionals, strives to strengthen students' skills and cultivate their talents through well-designed curricula.

A Population of Creative Minds

Students are attracted to The Art Institute of Phoenix from across the nation and around the world. Many have just graduated from high school; others seek new or expanded careers after considerable employment experience. What they all have in common is a keen desire to learn the creative skills they will need to apply their talents in successful careers.

These eager students, with their wide variety of talents, are guided by a faculty of men and women with the same kinds of creative minds. Many of the instructors enjoy successful careers of their own in the fields to which their students aspire. Many have years of experience teaching their skills and preparing students for success.

Personal Interview

November 13, 2007

Keith Bennett
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When did the CARE program become part of your curriculum?

Our school implemented the CARE program about five years ago. The program originally was designed to match one NPO to each student. The problem with that scenario was that if a student dropped the class, the NPO would be left out. The program was restructured to include one NPO client per session, and all the students make presentations to them.

How is the CARE program facilitated?

Once we identify the client, we invite them into the classroom to present their situation to the class.

Often the class is divided into teams, which then work as mini agencies. They each define the client's objectives; create goals to reach the objectives; do the research to learn solid background information on the client; create a marketing analysis; and then design a creative brief.

After the research phase, the students quickly realize that the NPO dollar is quite small, and that their job is to come up with a unique strategy that can help the NPO reach their goals and communicate to their audience.

When it comes time for the students to present their solutions, we want to create an authentic real-world experience, so the NPO rents a conference room in a nearby hotel. The teams present to the client and then leave the room. The client then discusses the presentations, critiques each team's work, then chooses a winner.

Each phase, including the student presentations, the closed-door client discussions, and the student critiques are filmed and reviewed with the class at a later date, so the students can learn where their strengths and shortcomings were.

How often do the students participate in this program?

During the course of the four year program, student's have anywhere from two to five opportunities to participate in this process. The first opportunity being as early as the third quarter of their first year of study.

What are the benefits this type of program offers your students?

The student's who step up and take charge in the group are generally the future creative directors. They learn to organize a group, keep everyone on task, and make sure the work is accomplished on time and on strategy.

The students also learn that extensive research, and solid problem solving must occur before any design can be accomplished. They also learn the value of a concept, and how it can be carried through many projects.

We receive feedback from industry professionals telling us that student's need better skills in presenting, articulating the creative brief, and closing a presentation. We believe these real-world opportunities are helping our students become better presenters.

Also, the students compete to have their work chosen by the client. If their work is chosen, they get the opportunity to have a real, professionally produced project in their portfolios. But even if a student's work isn't chosen, their proposed work still becomes a portfolio piece, and they still receive the real-world experience that they can include on their resumes.

Does the student's work become the property of the client?

Yes, this is very important: the client owns everything. The student relinquishes all rights to the artwork in exchange for a grade and the experience of participating. The client can hire the students outside of the classroom to continue to work on the project after the winner is chosen, but that is strictly at the client's discretion.

Do you have any difficulty finding NPOs to work with the students?

No. There is always a waiting list of NPOs who want to work with our students for their fresh and new ideas. We work primarily with local NPOs only because our presentation structure is critical to the success of our program.

Do you think that this type of opportunity enhances your student's ability to find employment after graduation?

Yes. The Art Institute of Phoenix's Advertising Design program boasts a 98.2% employment rate. Most students are employed in the industry within six months of graduation. I think the real-world experience the students acquire from this type of program definitely adds to their success in finding jobs.

Program Overview

Community Arts Resource Exchange— (C.A.R.E.)

The Community Arts Resource Exchange (C.A.R.E.) program at The Art Institute of Phoenix provides students with opportunities to apply their art and design talents to projects that support the needs of the community. The school selects community outreach projects that are a good fit with its educational programs and goals.

Nonprofit groups, arts organization, civic organizations and other community groups may apply for project assistance from students at The Art Institute of Phoenix. Areas of assistance may include the following:

- Logo Development
- Poster Design
- Brochures
- Flyers
- Business Cards
- Postcards
- Other Marketing Collateral Material
- Illustrations
- Computer Animation Sequences
- Interactive Media Projects (e.g., Streaming Audio or Video for Web)
- Web Site Recommendations or Development Assistance
- Other Student Volunteer Project
- Video Projects (e.g., PSA, educational video, promotional video, etc.)

To apply for project assistance from the school, please fill out the following Community Service Project Request Form, available from Ted Ciccone Director of Communications, 2233 West Dunlap Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85021, tel. 602.331.7500 or fax 602.331.5300.

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT GUIDELINES

Who We Are:

The Art Institute of Phoenix is a diverse, dynamic institution of higher education whose mission is to educate creative professionals. The school offers degree programs in Advertising, Culinary Arts, Digital Media Production, Game Art & Design, Graphic Design, Interactive Media Design, Interior Design, Media Arts & Animation, Visual Effects & Motion Graphics and Visual & Game Programming. Graduates are trained for entry-level positions in their chosen fields through curricula that emphasize actual job skills and competencies necessary for success in the field.

Community Outreach Focus:

The Art Institute of Phoenix provides students with opportunities to apply their talents to projects that support the needs of the community, while at the same time advancing their educational progress and career goals. The school carefully selects community outreach projects that are a good fit with its educational programs and goals.

Criteria for Selection:

- **Educational Fit.** Requests must be consistent with our applied arts focus and programs of study. The Dean of Academic Affairs, Academic Director, and sponsoring faculty member must approve the project, in consultation with the Director of Public Relations & Marketing.
- **Feasibility.** The project must fit into our educational calendar. Therefore, please submit proposals at least one quarter in advance of the target project start date. Our academic quarters occur early in January, April, July and October. Projects are to be completed over an 11-week quarter (e.g. projects to be started in April must be submitted the first week of January and so on).
- **Learning Opportunities.** Students should be given the opportunity to expand their knowledge and skills through the completion of the project.
- **Client Responsibilities.** Clients should meet with the students in class and/or at their offices during class hours at onset and approval stages of the projects. Clients must provide all copy for informational materials and supply digital files of text and images as needed. Outside costs, such as supplies and printing, will be paid by client. Proofreading is the sole responsibility of the client.
- **Opportunity for Student Recognition.** Clients should provide students and The Art Institute of Phoenix copies of all printed materials and letters of appreciation whether or not the work is used. As appropriate, all materials designed or created by students must identify students by name and affiliation with The Art Institute of Phoenix and include the school logo where possible.
- **Publicity Opportunities.** The school welcomes any opportunity to publicize student contributions to the community. The school will retain the right to use the project in its marketing materials and students will retain the right to use the project in their personal portfolios.

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT REQUEST FORM

Please complete this form or use it as a guideline for a written proposal. Submit all paperwork to Ted Ciccone Director of Communications Relations, 2233 West Dunlap Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona, 85021, tel. 602.331.7500, fax 602-331-5300, or e-mail tciccone@aii.edu.

Contact Information:

Name _____

Title _____

Organization _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Email _____

Web site _____

Address _____

Short Description of Organization:

Are you the sole contact for approval? _____ yes _____ no

If not, who else is responsible? _____

Project Information:

Please give a short description of the project including whom it benefits. Include materials, size, number to be printed, number of colors, other design specs, etc.

Request target date of completion. Mark one.

Submit Oct. 2007 - Project Start Jan. 2008 — Complete Mar. 2008

Submit Jan. 2008 - Project Start Apr. 2008 — Complete Jun.2008

Submit Apr. 2008 - Project Start Jul. 2008 — Complete Sept. 2008

Submit Jul. 2008 - Project Start Oct. 2008 — Complete Dec. 2008

Is there any budget for implementing the project? Misc. supplies, etc. _____

Are there opportunities for recognition for students who work on the project? If so, please describe.

For School Use ONLY

Project Sponsor: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Score (1-5)

Educational Fit: _____ Feasibility: _____ Learning: _____ Partnership: _____

Student Recognition/Publicity: _____



Student's Work



Machele Norris



Talisa Lopez-Garcia



Fernando Navarro