

A TASK INVENTORY OF BASIC DESIGN  
IN TWO YEAR, POST-SECONDARY  
COMMERCIAL ART  
PROGRAMS

By

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"The responsibility of higher education should be based on a conviction that talent in growth needs the nourishment of direction, example, and challenge. The implications go far beyond ones' specific training as a professional. One should ask the student to respond not only as a potential artist but also as a human being who sees a relationship between his art and his humanity. We should be prepared to lead students to a competence which will match their desire to improve the society and environment in which they live."

New York Art Directors Club  
Graphic Communications Curriculum  
Eileen Heady Schultz



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
Statement of the Problem . . . . .	2
Need for a Study . . . . .	2
Purpose of the Study . . . . .	2
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE . . . . .	3
III. METHODOLOGY . . . . .	9
IV. RESULTS . . . . .	11
Return Rates . . . . .	11
Return Results . . . . .	11
V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS . . . . .	22
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	27
APPENDIX A - DESIGN ELEMENTS AND PRINCIPLES . . . . .	29
APPENDIX B - THE INSTRUMENT . . . . .	31
APPENDIX C - COVER LETTER . . . . .	39

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. Time Allocations . . . . .	12
II. Developing a Teaching Philosophy of Design Basics . . . . .	13
III. Planning for Instruction . . . . .	15
IV. Executing Instruction . . . . .	17
V. Evaluating Instruction . . . . .	20

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

A study of design basics is generally accepted as a foundation for all future art endeavors. The application of the elements and principles (Appendix A) of design can be seen throughout the periods of art from the Frescoes of the Renaissance to the painting and sculpture of the 1980's. These principles have also been applied in the earliest advertising; the posters and magazine covers of the 1890's and to the billboards, magazine layout and electronic media of today.

In determining the objectives of a fundamental design class one must be careful in not trying to be too specific in their expectations. There is no "formula" for esthetics. The first responsibility of a fundamental design class is to open one's eyes to the vast learning possibilities. Nicolaidis (1941) stated that we should teach how to learn to draw not how to draw. This precept applies to the teaching of design as well. Skinner (1968) stated that teachers do not change minds or therapists personalities; they change the worlds in which students and patients live.

The teacher must be aware that students have various backgrounds, aptitudes and interests which demand of teachers an equally varied array of presentation modes. What is highly effective with one student or class may be far less effective with another.



## Statement of the Problem

There seems to be an inconsistency in the approach to teaching fundamentals of design in the preliminary course. More specifically the inconsistency occurs in two year colleges with terminal programs where often the amount of time devoted to basics has been replaced by more specialized and technologically oriented programs. In any case, little is known about the techniques presently being used to teach basic design. Without knowing what is presently being done, there is little hope of improving on it.

## Need for a Study

A task inventory of basic design techniques used in two year post-secondary commercial art programs would help determine approaches used by various basic design instructors. The analysis of these inventories would then determine (1) if there was any consistency to instructional course content, or (2) that course content varies considerably from one teacher to another.

## Purpose of the Study

It was the purpose of this study to investigate procedures and approaches of teaching the basics of Design in two year post-secondary commercial art programs. Of particular interest was the amount of time devoted to Design Basics, teaching philosophies, methods of instruction, and evaluation procedures. Teachers should constantly re-evaluate curriculum to determine its relevancy. The results of this study should help determine if changes should be made and help validate the instigation of new instructional criteria.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The subject of design, particularly "basic" design turned up few investigative studies. Perhaps one of the reasons is that few art educators agree on a universal set of design elements and principles from which to teach.

In the areas of task analysis, teaching objectives, and learning processes there was ample material available.

It seems necessary to begin with a list of definitions of general terms being used in this study.

Webster's New World Dictionary (1966) defines "Art" as the conscious use of skill, taste and creative imagination in the production of aesthetic objects. In its most distinct sense it implies a personal, unanalyzable creative power.

Anderson (1961) states that an artist is one who, manipulating a set of such raw materials as clay, wire, pigment, data, sounds, words, or numbers and transforms them into cohesive structures on a higher level of significance.

It was previously noted that there is no known formula for aesthetics. There are fundamentals and skills that can be taught in order to allow the creativity of an artist to attain a "higher level of significance."

The fundamentals in a preliminary course generally deal with

drawing and design, with both disciplines sharing equal importance in the commercial art curriculum.

Design can be an arbitrary term, but as it relates to the visual arts it can be defined according to Nelson (1977), as the organization, plan and arrangement of visual elements. The process of creation called design, Anderson (1961), deals with coming up with an idea, the planning, the rejections, and the correlation of parts.

The designer has certain design elements and principles which help to structure the visual problem being worked on. These elements: line, shape, value, texture and color represent the visual language of the artist. The term "Elements" according to Webster (1966) is defined as the qualities that enter into the make up of a complex product.

The principles of design, generally considered to be: balance, eye movement, repetition, contrast, dominance, proportion, and spacial relationship (the use of positive and negative space), allow the artist methods to harmonize or unify the visual problem.

The principles are all relatively abstract in their usage and rarely are they all used in a successful design.

The student who cannot think in abstract terms has a great deal of difficulty in applying the design principles in a creative manner. What is "Creativity" has been an interesting topic of discussion among art instructors. Most will agree that creativity is a gift and that it is an inherited trait. The problem of whether creativity can be learned or even if it should be taught (particularly in a two year commercial art curriculum) is treated with some dogmatism among art educators.

Eisner (1965) distinguished that there are four types of creativity. These types are called boundary pushing, inventing, boundary breaking,

and aesthetic organizing. Boundary pushing is defined as extending the use or function of an ordinary object, form, or subject matter; inventing is the combination of forms, objects, or subject matters in such a way that an essentially new form, object, or subject matter is created; and boundary breaking is a result of making the given problematic and creating a form, object, or subject matter that is radically new.

Without an environment that promotes creativity one is no longer teaching students to become artists but rather craftspersons. When educators do not recognize and nourish creative abilities then they are indeed doing the student an injustice.

To insure that creativity has its place in the classroom, one needs to have carefully defined instructional objectives.

Objectives link the concept of defined outcomes and the practice of instruction. The process of specifying objectives is applicable to any area, field, subject, discipline, body of knowledge, or desired teaching outcome, according to Arthur Cohen (1969). He also states that an objective must derive from a goal and that it must include three parts: (1) a task--(activity, behavior), to be performed by a learner under a particular (2) set of conditions or circumstances, (3) to a specified degree of accuracy -- a criterion or standard.

Krathwahl and Bloom's Taxonomy (1961) defines the three classifications of objectives as: (1) Cognitive: objectives which emphasize remembering or reproducing something which has presumably been learned, as well as objectives which involve the solving of some intellectual task for which the individual has to determine the essential problem and then reorder given material or combine it with ideas, methods, or procedures previously learned. (2) Affective: objectives which emphasize a feeling

tone, an emotion, or a degree of acceptance or rejection. Such objectives can be expressed as interests, attitudes, appreciations, values, and emotional sets or biases. (3) Psychomotor: objectives which emphasize some muscular or motor skills, some manipulation of material and objects, or some act which requires neuromuscular co-ordination.

In maintaining a creative environment during a limited time span such as two years, it seems necessary to limit the psychomotor and emphasize the cognitive and particularly the affective domains.

In "Psychology of Learning" (Glaser, 1965), there are important specifications to consider. These specifications are stated: (1) the properties of the behavior or task to be learned; (2) the characteristics of the learner; (3) the conditions which permit the individual with the behavior described in (1); and (4) the conditions under which the learned behavior will be maintained and the individual will be motivated to use it.

In regard to motivation and criticism, Woodruff (1961) maintains that no student needs to feel that he or she is succeeding all the time. In fact, that could lead to smugness and complacency. What is generally regarded as desirable is a balance between success and failure, with the balance in favor of success. This begets confidence and produces good motivation. It enables the student to feel good about his other self and to tackle the work with assurance and pleasure. An overbalance of a sense of failure creates despair, loss of self-respect, and fear of new experiences. It will lead to dislike of school and everything with it.

Woodruff also states that the most effective kind of motivation is that which develops within people when they begin to get a vision of high

life goals for themselves which drive them toward their fulfillment. Part of this is the discovery of the real thrill of achievement and the excitement of self-direction toward something very much desired. In a measure this sense of dedication to an ideal can be aroused in all students by a teacher who continuously helps them to look ahead and to recognize their possibilities. When work is well done, recognition is not only appropriate but essential, because it helps the student know what progress he is making.

Skinner's (1968) learning theory is based on these assumptions: (1) man is a machine; (2) all learning is by trial and error; (3) all learning is a conditioning process; and (4) conditioning depends on reinforcement (reward or punishment). Skinner called "the techniques used in modifying human behavior as a method of rewarding the behavior you wish to instill by positive reinforcement" -- operant conditioning.

If a college student solves a problem correctly and is immediately praised by the instructor, the responses that led to the solution of the problem are more likely to recur.

Skinner's application of operant conditioning best represents the associationist approach to learning today. One shapes the behavior of the learner by reinforcement. Teaching is thus the arrangement of reinforcement, which Skinner calls contingency management.

Skinner (1969, p. 22) stresses three shortcomings of traditional teaching methods:

1. The lapse of time between action and reinforcement. Some exam papers are not handed back until days after they are written.
2. Lack of a well-organized presentation of stages in teaching.
3. The relative infrequency of reinforcement. With large classes and split sessions, the amount of reinforcement a teacher can supply to individual students is severely limited.

This study has utilized a task inventory to help analyze instructional criteria for the basic design course.

The use of this technique (task inventory) was developed for use in the United States Air Force and has been applied to literally hundreds of occupations in the Air Force over the past 20 years. Additionally, the Department of Education (DOE) has sponsored an entire series of task inventories of technical and occupational trades that have been administered by the Instructional Materials Lab at Ohio State University, (Mowen, 1974).

A task inventory is administered by having job incumbents respond in two ways to a list of occupational tasks. Firstly, the incumbents respond yes or no to the question: Do you perform this task? Then the incumbents rate the relative amount of time spent performing each task compared to all of the other tasks performed.

The task analysis data provides a basis for generating instructional materials, course outlines, student performance objectives, criterion measures, and supporting skills in the academic areas.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted among Basic Design teachers who teach in two year post-secondary programs. The method used involved four distinct steps. Those steps were:

1. Selection of the respondents.
2. Development of the instrument.
3. Collection of the data.
4. Analysis of the results.

Each of these steps will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

#### Selection of the Respondents

It was assumed that two-year terminal programs in Commercial Art would have similar goals and objectives. The primary objective would be to place the graduate in the job market. In selecting the respondents Barron's Guide to the Two Year Colleges, The "Blue Book" of Occupations and Trades, and The American Artist Directory of Schools and Colleges in the United States, 1979 were used.

The results of this selection procedure gave a total of 65 schools offering two-year programs.

#### Development of the Instrument

In determining the duties of a teacher, those used by Tinnell (1975) were used as a guide. A total of six duties were used in the instrument. Tasks that were relevant to the teaching of design basics were identified



and associated with the duties. Of particular interest were similarities, differences and philosophies in teaching approaches.

Once completed, the instrument was checked for clarity and appropriateness by members of the faculty of the Commercial Art Department at Oklahoma State Tech in Okmulgee. The final instrument as used is in Appendix B.

#### Collection of the Data

The instrument was mailed to the Commercial Art department chairman of the selected institutions. They in turn were asked to forward the instrument to be filled out by their basic design instructors. The instruments were mailed on February 27, 1981. Postage paid return envelopes were included to facilitate the return of the completed instruments.

#### Analysis of the Data

It was determined that the responses on this instrument would be primarily nominal in nature.

The tasks associated with each duty were to be ranked with a percentage according to the time spent or task performance of the respondents.

#### Limitations

The tasks listed in this instrument do not reflect a universal commonality of usage by basic design instructors. The responses themselves may reflect misunderstandings or misrepresentations.

The tasks do, however, reflect the content of many courses in design basics and thus do have relevancy for this study.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

#### Return Rates

Thirteen respondents out of a total of 65 returned the instrument. Two of those 13 were from the same institution. All returns were considered to be complete. The percentage of return was 20%.

#### Return Results

Upon receipt of the instruments a percentage of the tasks performed by the respondents was calculated.

A table for each of the five duties and their tasks is given on the following pages.

Table I presents the amount of time instructors reported devoting to the teaching of design basics. Lecture time on the design elements and principles indicated an unusually large amount of time devoted. The time devoted to monocular clues was less, as many instructors lectured on this area in their drawing classes.

The amount of time students were given to work on assignments in class indicates that most taught design as a "laboratory" class.

Although 46% indicated a strict deadline on assignments, a large percentage suggested that they rarely gave an unsatisfactory grade for late work.

The most surprising percentage on this table was that 85% of the

respondents suggested that at least one-fourth (31% suggested that over one-half of the time be spent) of the curriculum be devoted to design basics in a two year commercial art program.

TABLE I  
TIME ALLOCATIONS

Time Allocations	Percent			
	None	25%	25-50%	50%
1. Lecture on design elements		46	31	23
2. Lecture on design principles		38	31	31
3. Lecture on monocular clues	15	38	31	8
4. Allow ___% of time for student execution of assignments	15	15	23	46
5. Expect student to spend ___% of time on assignments in class	8	15	15	62
6. Expect student to spend ___% of time researching assignments in class	31	31	23	15
7. Emphasize that only a prescribed amount of time will be allowed for a student to finish a project	15	38		46
8. Grade work that is turned in late with an unsatisfactory mark	38	31		31
9. Suggest that ___% of time be spent on design basics in a two-year commercial art curriculum	8	8	54	31

Item one and two of Table II suggested that an equally large

proportion of teachers create design assignments with practical applications in mind as they do assignments which are more academic.

TABLE II  
DEVELOPING A TEACHING PHILOSOPHY OF DESIGN BASICS

Developing a Teaching Philosophy of Design Basics	Percent				
	Never	Rarely	Some- times	Often	Very Often
1. Create design assignments which reflect design as a discipline in itself	8	8	8	23	54
2. Create design assignments which have an applied or practical application		8		23	62
3. Develop design assignments with pre-conceived, "cultivated" solutions in mind	15	15	31	38	8
4. Recommend a commercial art curriculum which offers an "integrated" course structure	15		8	38	38
5. Recommend a commercial art curriculum which offers a sequential course structure	15	15	8	23	38
6. Prepare my course structure to emphasize:					
a. Knowledge over skills	8	23	23	15	31
b. Results over experimentation		8	38	31	23
c. Originality over cultivated approaches		8	31	54	8
7. Agree with the artist author Armin Hoffman in stating: "The purpose of the preliminary course is to prepare a well-defined central area from which paths can branch off in every direction."	8	8	8	8	69

TABLE II (Continued)

Developing a Teaching Philosophy of Design Basics	Percent				
	Never	Rarely	Some- times	Often	Very Often
8. Plan design curriculum on the needs of local and regional industry	15	15	31	8	31
9. Revise basic design curriculum according to the advice of an industrial advisory committee	15	15	46	8	15

There seems to be a variety of opinion on whether to teach "cultivated solutions" (for example the use of a grid layout or dynamic symmetry, etc.) in the design basics class.

Several respondents indicated some misunderstanding on items five and six and the percentages also indicate the same. Seventy-six percent recommended an integrated curriculum whereas 61% recommended a sequential curriculum.

In the question of whether "knowledge" should be stressed more than "skills" there was no clear trend. This suggests that the respondents place about equal importance on the cognitive domain as they do the psychomotor.

Most of the respondents indicated that they would rather see "results" over "experimentation: in their design classes and they also felt that originality was more important than cultivated approaches."

Seventy-seven percent of the respondents agreed with the statement in item seven suggesting that the purpose of the preliminary course be to prepare a well-defined central area from which more specialized paths can branch off.

It appeared that industry had no major effect on curriculum development in the basic design course.

TABLE III  
PLANNING FOR INSTRUCTION

Planning for Instruction	Percent				
	Never	Rarely	Some- times	Often	Very Often
1. Plan student exercises which deal specifically with individual <u>elements</u> of design					
a. line	23	8	8	15	46
b. value	15	8	8	8	62
c. texture	15	8	23	23	31
d. shape	15	8		23	54
e. color	15	8		23	54
2. Plan student exercises which deal specifically with individual <u>principles</u> of design					
a. unity	15		8		77
b. balance	15		8	8	69
c. rhythm	23		15	8	54
d. emphasis/focal point	23			15	62
e. scale/proportion	15		15	15	54
f. eye movement	15		15	8	62
3. Plan student exercises which specifically deal with the monocular clues (illusion of space):					
a. overlap	23		31	23	23
b. relative apparent size	23	8	8	31	31
c. relative position	23	8	8	23	38
d. light and shadow	31		31	15	23
e. aerial perspective	38	8	31	15	8
4. Plan assignments in the basic design course dealing with 3-dimensional design principles	38	15	23	23	

TABLE III (Continued)

Planning for Instruction	Percent				
	Never	Rarely	Some- times	Often	Very Often
5. Plan assignments dealing with pictorial composition in the basic design course	15		15	23	38
6. Plan assignments utilizing typographical elements	15	15	15	31	15
7. Purposely plan the integration of more than one design principle in student exercises			8	8	77

The majority of the respondents indicated planning specific assignments on the design elements and principles. Additional elements of design used by the respondents were "Size," "Direction," "Structure," "Volume," and "Form." Other Principles of Design used by the respondents were "Alternation," "Gradation," "Harmony," "Contrast," and "Repetition."

The survey indicated that of the monocular clues listed, light and shadow and aerial perspective were rarely taught in the design curriculum, whereas they were emphasized in a drawing class.

There was some indication that the monocular clues were not taught at all by some respondents.

The percentages on item four suggest that three-dimensional design principles were rarely taught in the basic design curriculum.

Most instructors did indicate the inclusion of pictorial composition in their curriculum whereas there was no overwhelming support for

utilizing typographical elements in student projects.

In item seven there was strong support for the inclusion of more than one design principle in student projects.

TABLE IV  
EXECUTING INSTRUCTION

Executing Instruction	Percent				
	Never	Rarely	Some- times	Often	Very Often
1. Assign basic design exercises suggesting that subject matter be dealt with:					
a. representationally	8	15	23	8	38
b. semi-abstractly	8	8	23	31	23
c. abstractly	8	23	15	23	23
d. non-objectively	15	31	31	8	8
2. Present lessons using:					
a. slides		8	23	31	38
b. filmstrips	31	31	15	23	
c. films	31	23	23	31	
d. chalkboard	15	8	15	23	38
e. flip-charts	69	15		15	
f. overhead projector	46	23	8	8	15
g. original examples			23	23	54
3. Introduce the following mediums during the basic design course:					
a. Tempera	38		8	23	23
b. Gouache	54			15	23
c. Acrylic	23		31	23	15
d. Graphite	38	8	8	15	23
4. Introduce the following tools during the basic design course:					
a. brushes			8	38	46



TABLE IV (Continued)

Executing Instruction	Percent				
	Never	Rarely	Some- times	Often	Very Often
b. technical pens	23	8	8	23	31
c. ruling pen	31	8	15	15	23
d. air brush	54	8	15		15
e. T-square	8		31	8	46
f. triangle			31	15	54
5. Introduce a variety of paper stocks	15	15	31	8	23
6. Emphasize the freedom of choice of tools, mediums and papers for student projects	15	8	31	23	15
7. Recommend the use of an art-o-graph (projector-enlarger) to be used on student projects	31	15	8	31	8
8. Include in my basic design course the exposure to accepted formats:					
a. grid		15	23	8	46
b. mondrian	15	23	23	15	15
c. golden rectangle	8	38	23	8	15
9. Include in the advanced, more specialized courses, specific reinforcement of design elements and principles	15		15	8	62

Under the "duty" of Executing Instruction, the percentages in item one i.e., assign basic design exercises suggesting that subject matter be dealt with: a. representationally; b. semi-abstractly; c. abstractly; d. non-objectively; suggests a variety of approaches for dealing with subject matter in assignments. Noticeably the non-objective subject matter was used far less than the others.

Item 2 dealt with lesson presentation. The respondents indicated that they preferred slides over films and filmstrips. Additionally they indicated a preference for the chalkboard and original examples instead of using flip-charts and an overhead projector. Some other devices used by the respondents were: Easel, Demonstrations, Opaque Projector and Video Tape.

In artist mediums used by the respondents (Item 3) it is suggested that few instructors used gouache and there was limited use of graphite. There seemed to be no particular "favorite" mediums which indicates the introduction of a variety of mediums during the design class. Additional mediums used by the respondents were ink and pastels.

The introduction of tools (Item 4) represents that brushes, technical pens, T-squares and triangles were commonly used. The air brush and ruling pen were used rarely by the respondents. Additional tools added by the respondents were: X-Acto Knife, French Curves, Templates and Color-Aided Paper.

The instructors who responded to items five and six indicated no real preferences on the importance of freedom of choice of tools, materials and mediums on basic design projects.

The respondents generally seemed to feel that an Art-o-graph could be used on some projects but should be carefully controlled.

The grid format seemed to have the most acceptance by the respondents in Item 8. The Mondrian and Golden Rectangle however were not universally used. Additional formats suggested by the respondents were: Swiss Grid, Dynamic Symmetry, and Rule of No Orphans.

Seventy percent of the respondents indicated a need for specific reinforcement of design elements and principles in advanced, more specialized classes.

There was indication that only 50% of the respondents gave written tests on the design elements and principles and of those, only a few consistently gave tests.

TABLE V  
EVALUATING INSTRUCTION

Evaluating Instruction	Percent				
	Never	Rarely	Some- times	Often	Very Often
1. Assign written tests over design elements and principles	23	31	15	23	8
2. Assign specific grades to each assignment			15	8	77
3. Evaluate student assignments with written comments		15	8	15	62
4. Evaluate student assignments in a group critique		15	31	8	46
5. Encourage a "competitive" atmosphere on assignments	23	8	23	23	23
6. Determine a final grade through:					
a. Objective grading procedures	8		15	15	62
b. Subjective grading procedures	23	15	15	23	23
7. Believe that putting a specific grade on assignments:					
a. Slows down the creative process	38	15	38	8	
b. Motivates creativity	15	8	46	8	23

One hundred percent of the respondents assigned specific grades to the assignments at least part of the time. Evaluating assignments with written comments seemed to be practiced more than using a group critique method, although both methods showed affirmative responses. The idea of encouraging a competitive quality in students had as many negative responses as it did affirmative.

Grading procedures seem to be more objective than subjective, but there seemed to be some application of both in the basic design classroom.

Placing a specific grade on assignments may motivate some students whereas in others the creative process seems to be stymied. The percentages indicate that a slight majority of the respondents believe that grades do motivate creativity.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

As stated in Chapter I the purpose of this study was to investigate procedures and approaches of teaching basics of design in two year post-secondary commercial art programs. It was felt that by analyzing instructional criteria used by other design instructors, the results could be used in re-evaluating existing curricula.

Since the field of Commercial Art is becoming more technologically oriented, there seems to be a de-emphasis of the process of design and original creation in the classroom.

Armin Hoffman (1965) asks the following questions:

1. Do the schools today believe they must adhere to educational subjects that can be conveyed, assessed and stored more readily than activities in which imagination and creative gifts can be given free rein?
2. Is the curriculum being influenced from outside by the prevailing trend towards the accumulation of rapidly and easily assimilated knowledge?

Hoffman concludes: Whatever the reasons may be for this bias towards the presentation of knowledge, there is no doubt that it fails to provide a basis for fruitful educational work. Questions of composition, combination and variation cannot be dealt with within such a curriculum. The creative student cannot develop and his valuable gifts become stunted.

It is true that constant change and new technologies tend to make instruction disoriented. The teacher is constantly evaluating teaching

objectives and finds it difficult to hold onto traditional approaches even though they may have been very successful in the past. The unfortunate consequence to this disorientation is that the student invariably suffers the most.

The most recent technology affecting the commercial art industry is computer aided artwork. This technology will have considerable impact on curriculum in the next ten years.

Since computer aided artwork will represent such an important change in the future of a commercial art program, undoubtedly there will be some influence of this technology in the structure of the Basic Design course.

Of particular interest in the task analysis was determining how much emphasis there was on creativity in the design course. The question that will face educators using the computer in a traditionally esthetic environment will be how much compromising of creativity will take place.

According to the contemporary designer, Seymour Chwast (Visions '80's 1980), laser beams cannot help designers to think, to draw, to find the best way to communicate ideas to other human beings. He sees electronics and computers as dehumanizing "communications, education, entertainment, and dissemination of culture" and leading to designers developing "conglomerate minds" that produce look alike solutions.

Although basically the survey indicated an affirmative response to originality, experimentation and design knowledge, there were several respondents who recommended a curriculum which might teach guaranteed or cultivated solutions in place of experimentation.

Hoffman (1965) states: The less experimental work done by people engaged in the actual practice of a profession and intent on extracting from it as much material gain as they can, the more energy and careful

thought must the schools devote to experiment and research.

It thus becomes the responsibility of the school to provide training which encourages experimentation often at the expense of results.

Experimentation should be explored in the preliminary design class as well as throughout a curriculum in order to re-inforce the importance of it on the individual's job.

One of the questions answered by the respondents, as stated in Chapter IV, dealt with the amount of time devoted to design basics in a two year commercial art program. In the results 85% of the respondents suggested that one-fourth (six months) of the time be spent on basic design. Of that 85% there were 31% of the respondents who recommended that one-half (one year) of the program be devoted to basic design.

It can be concluded that these respondents placed a great deal of importance on the teaching of design basics.

This emphasis on time and relative importance should not be infringed on by the more specialized, advanced courses in the two year program as this period is extremely important in developing the student's creative abilities.

A question that arises is, should the educator allow technological advancements to influence curriculum at the possible expense of de-emphasizing talent and imagination?

In order to construct a basic design curriculum that would stay relevant through an age of constant technological change, it is necessary to maintain a consistent educational philosophy.

When determining philosophy as stated by Tyler (1975), the question arises, "Should the educated man adjust to society, should he accept the social order as it is, or should he attempt to improve the society in

which he lives?" Another way of stating this question is in this form, "Should the school develop young people to fit into the present society or does the school have a revolutionary mission to develop young people who will seek to improve the society?"

Tyler states that a modern school would include in its statement a position that has some of both of these implications; that is, it believes that the high ideals of a good society are not adequately realized in our present society and that through the education of young people it hopes to improve society at the same time that it helps young people to understand well enough and participate competently enough in the present society to be able to get along in it and to work effectively in it while they are working to improve it.

However these questions may be answered, the answer in turn affects the educational objectives that are selected. Tyler concludes: If the school believes that its primary function is to teach people to adjust to society it will strongly emphasize obedience to the present authorities, loyalty to the present forms and traditions, skills in carrying on the present techniques of life; whereas if it emphasizes the revolutionary function of the school it will be more concerned with critical analysis, ability to meet new problems, independence and self-direction, freedom, and self-discipline.

It seems that if the curriculum for a commercial art program does not assume the aforementioned "revolutionary" function of attempting to make a contribution to society then it is defeating the basic definition of an Artist and a Designer. No longer will the educator be teaching students how to learn to design but will be teaching them how to design.

If the new objectives do not create an environment that promotes



creativity the student artists will most likely be relegated to imitation of existing styles and ideas and dependency on technical equipment.

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APPENDIX A

DESIGN ELEMENTS AND PRINCIPLES

ELEMENTS	MAJOR PRINCIPLES	MINOR PRINCIPLES	RESULTING ATTRIBUTES	SUPREME ATTAINMENT
LINE	REPETITION	ALTERNATION	HARMONY (UNITY)	BEAUTY
FORM (SHAPE)	RHYTHM	SEQUENCE	FITNESS (UTILITARIANISM)	
TONE (VALUE)	PROPORTION	RADIATION		
TEXTURES	BALANCE	PARALLELISM		
COLOR	EMPHASIS	TRANSITION  SYMMETRY  CONTRAST		

This table presented in 1920's by art educators.

APPENDIX B

THE INSTRUMENT

#### PURPOSE OF INVENTORY

This inventory hopes to determine if there is a continuity of approaches to the teaching of design basics in the preliminary course for a commercial art curriculum. Also of concern is the amount of time devoted to design basics and if the commercial art curriculum is sequential or integrated.

#### GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Please complete the page on background information, then proceed to the task inventory. Instructions for the inventory will precede the questions on each page.

Please return the questionnaire promptly.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

How many years have you taught in your present position?

How many years of non-teaching employment experience have you had in your specialty?

Check the type of institution where you teach:

Community/Junior College

Vocational-Technical College

4-year College or University

Private Art School or College

Is your commercial art program terminal or transfer?

What is the name of the degree your graduate earns?

What is a typical job your graduate takes upon completion?

What percentage of your graduates work primarily in the "design" field?



Listed below is a duty and tasks which it includes, check all tasks which you perform.

TIME ALLOCATIONS	NONE	LESS THAN 25%	25-50%	OVER 50%
Please estimate the percentage of time in your basic design course that you spend in each of the following job activities.				
1. Lecture on design elements				
2. Lecture on design principles				
3. Lecture on monocular clues				
4. Allow ___% of time for student execution of assignments				
5. Expect student to spend ___% of time on assignments in class				
6. Expect student to spend ___% of time researching assignments in class				
7. Emphasize that only a prescribed amount of time will be allowed for a student to finish a project				
8. Grade work that is turned in late with an unsatisfactory mark				
9. Suggest that ___% of time be spend on design basics in a two-year commercial art curriculum				

Listed below is a duty and tasks which it includes, check all tasks which you perform.

DEVELOPING A TEACHING PHILOSOPHY OF DESIGN BASICS	NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	VERY OFTEN
1. Create design assignments which reflect design as a discipline in itself					
2. Create design assignments which have an applied or practical application					
3. Develop design assignments with preconceived, "cultivated" solutions in mind					
4. Recommend a commercial art curriculum which offers an "integrated" course structure					
5. Recommend a commercial art curriculum which offers a sequential course structure					

	NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	VERY OFTEN
DEVELOPING A TEACHING PHILOSOPHY OF DESIGN BASICS (cont'd.)					
6. Prepare my course structure to emphasize: a. Knowledge over skills b. Results over experimentation c. Originality over cultivated approaches					
7. Agree with the artist author Armin Hoffman in stating: "The purpose of the preliminary course is to prepare a well-defined central area from which paths can branch off in every direction."					
8. Plan design curriculum on the needs of local and regional industry					
9. Revise basic design curriculum according to the advice of an industrial advisory committee					

Listed below is a duty and tasks which it includes, check all tasks which you perform.

	NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	VERY OFTEN
PLANNING FOR INSTRUCTION					
1. Plan student exercises which deal specifically with individual <u>elements</u> of design					
a. line					
b. value					
c. texture					
d. shape					
e. color					
Others: _____					
2. Plan student exercises which deal specifically with individual <u>principles</u> of design					
a. unity					
b. balance					
c. rhythm					
d. emphasis/focal point					
e. scale/production					
f. eye movement					
Others: _____					

PLANNING FOR INSTRUCTION (cont'd.)	NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	VERY OFTEN
3. Plan student exercises which specifically deal with the monocular clues (illusion of space):					
a. overlap					
b. relative apparent size					
c. relative position					
d. light and shadow					
e. aerial perspective					
4. Plan assignments in the basic design course dealing with 3-dimensional design principles					
5. Plan assignments dealing with pictorial composition in the basic design course					
6. Plan assignments utilizing typographical elements					
7. Purposely plan the integration of more than one design principle in student exercises					
Listed below is a duty and tasks which it includes, check all tasks which you perform.					
EXECUTING INSTRUCTION	NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	VERY OFTEN
1. Assign basic design exercises suggesting that subject matter be dealt with					
a. representationally					
b. semi-abstractly					
c. abstractly					
d. non-objectively					
2. Present lessons using:					
a. slides					
b. filmstrips					
c. films					
d. chalkboard					
e. flip-charts					
f. overhead projector					
g. original examples					
Other: _____					

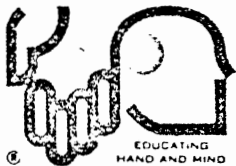
EXECUTING INSTRUCTION (cont'd.)	NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	VERY OFTEN
3. Introduce the following mediums during the basic design course:					
a. Tempera					
b. Gouache					
c. Acrylic					
d. Graphite					
Other: _____					
4. Introduce the following tools during the basic design course:					
a. Brushes					
b. Technical pens					
c. Ruling pen					
d. Air brush					
e. T-square					
f. Triangle					
Other: _____					
5. Introduce a variety of paper stocks					
6. Emphasize the freedom of choice of tools, mediums and papers for student projects					
7. Recommend the use of an art-o-graph (projector-enlarger) to be used on student projects					
8. Include in my basic design course the exposure to accepted formats:					
a. Grid					
b. Mondrian					
c. Golden rectangle					
Other: _____					
9. Include in the advanced, more specialized courses, specific re-inforcement of design elements and principles					

Listed below is a duty and tasks which it includes, check all tasks which you perform.

EVALUATING INSTRUCTION	NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	VERY OFTEN
1. Assign written tests over design elements and principles					
2. Assign specific grades to each assignment					
3. Evaluate student assignments with written comments					
4. Evaluate student assignments in a group critique					
5. Encourage a "competitive" atmosphere on assignments					
6. Determine a final grade through:					
a. Objective grading procedures					
b. Subjective grading procedures					
7. Believe that putting a specific grade on assignments:					
a. Slows down the creative process					
b. Motivates creativity					

APPENDIX C

COVER LETTER



Oklahoma  
State Tech

Okmulgee 74447

Chairman  
Commercial Art/Advertising Department

Dear Colleague,

At Oklahoma State Tech we try continuously to maintain a high level of excellence in our Commercial Art program. At present we are interested in comparing the approach we use to teaching creative design basics to that used by others. We hope you will help us with the completion and return of the enclosed check list.

Specifically what we need is for you to ask the person on your faculty who teaches Creative Design Basics to complete and return the check list. The results from various institutions will be summarized in a final report. Institutions will not be individually identified.

If you would like to receive a copy of the final report, simply provide a mailing address on the front of the check list and we will send it to you.

Your help in this matter will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'R. G. Borchert'.

R. G. Borchert

A Technical Branch of Oklahoma State University

VITA<sup>2</sup>

Rollin Gary Borchert

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Education

Thesis: A TASK INVENTORY OF BASIC DESIGN IN TWO YEAR,  
POST-SECONDARY COMMERCIAL ART PROGRAMS

Major Field: Occupational and Adult Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Oakland, California, July 30, 1944,  
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with a major in Art Education; completed requirements  
for Master of Science degree at Oklahoma State University  
in July, 1981.

Professional Experience: Instructor of Commercial Art at  
Oklahoma State Tech, Okmulgee, 1967 to present.