

Photography Advisory Committee Meeting
Hoffbrau Restaurant
Minutes from May 14, 2009

Present: Herb Crowell, John Ebling, Art Gray, Mason Gray, Mike Mahon, Tracy Pitt, Michael Schumacher, Vondel Stevens

Absent: Mike Calcote, Cindy Eastland, Davy Knapp, Robert Suddarth, Ric Wester

Others Present: Brent Cavanaugh, Victoria Taylor-Gore, Kenneth Pirtle, Robert Boyd

Mr. Cavanaugh called the meeting to order at 11:40 a.m. and welcomed everyone with thanks for attending the meeting.

A special welcome was given to Victoria Taylor-Gore, new Visual Arts department chair and Rene' West, new photography instructor. It was suggested that the advisory committee consider meeting at Gray's Studio in the future. No action was taken.

Ms. Taylor-Gore moved to approve the minutes from 2008. Mr. Gray seconded. Minutes were unanimously approved as written.

Mr. Cavanaugh led a discussion regarding the advancement of digital while maintaining the wet labs. The program is now about 90% digital but the instructors have maintained an emphasis on the basics of photography and the darkroom. The discussion continued with a focus on the importance of learning film.

Ms. Taylor-Gore mentioned that the Texas Association of Schools of Art had conducted a survey with the results indicating that most photography departments have a wet & dry combination of photography because of a reluctance to let go of the wet labs despite challenges of equipment, chemicals and facilities. A brief discussion followed regarding the cost of supplies for students and the school.

Standardization of photography courses with other art and graphic design courses was discussed by Ms. Taylor-Gore (handout). Reasons for changes were transfer, contact hours for consistency with other studio classes and hours of instruction.

Ms. Taylor-Gore noted that photography students participated in the Visual Arts Showcase where professionals in the field, including Mr. Pirtle and Ms. Pitt, judged their work. She invited all members to participate.

Mr. Cavanaugh asked for feedback from the committee as to skills, etc. the students should have upon graduation. Mr. Gray stated that web design skills are important. Mr. Pirtle suggested the students take a self-marketing workshop where they can prepare a DVD. Ms. Pitt stated that her Portrait students suggested some kind of business class. It was agreed that the students should have a small business class/seminar that would be held in an upper-level class.

Ms. Taylor-Gore discussed enrollment, informing the committee that there are over 100 photography majors. More part-time instructors may be needed in the future due to the high demand; although space is limited.

It was announced that Leonard McLaughlin was outstanding major. Student exhibits were announced as well as upcoming student travel plans for the photo club and Landscape Class.

Ms. Taylor-Gore discussed the upcoming renovations of Parcels Hall, with plans for photography and graphic design to share space and labs in the new facilities. Mr. Gray asked about wireless capabilities in the new facilities. Mr. Cavanaugh responded that the College is providing more and more areas for wireless as time goes by.

Mr. Cavanaugh discussed new hardware and software for the department (handout). Mr. Cavanaugh and Ms. West discussed their professional development plans including Mr. Cavanaugh's upcoming trip to the Books Institute Educator's Workshop. Mr. Boyd acknowledged the Art Force and their generous yearly grants to the department.

Mr. Gray suggested that Photography Advisory Committee members be added to an email list for upcoming announcements and events. Ms. Taylor-Gore agreed to create a group for an email mailing list.

A brief discussion followed concerning job opportunities for photography students with the group agreeing that students need to apprentice before starting their own business. Mr. Gray noted that there are hiring restrictions for small studios. Mr. Cavanaugh noted that Family Photo hires a good number of students and that there is an internship class available for credit.

Mr. Cavanaugh reminded the group that he and the department are always open to suggestions for the curriculum.

Ms. Taylor-Gore thanked the group for their participation and support and encouraged their continued input.

Meeting adjourned at 1:35.