

Pierce College

Media Arts
Dept.

Program Review 2006

The Pierce College Media Arts Dept. is committed to the following:

1. Offering students a comprehensive introduction to the study of media **arts**, both **fulfilling** transfer requirements to **four**-year institutions and leading to vocational opportunities.
2. Providing students with opportunities to acquire practical skills and hands-on experience in laboratory settings.
3. Fostering critical awareness of current events and the role of the various mass media in shaping society.
4. Serving the college and the local community with quality student-produced information and discussion outlets.
5. Imparting to students the importance of ethics and high standards in the various media.
6. Maintaining relationships with program alumni who can serve as media advisors and industry liaisons.

An Overview – the Past

Introduction: The Media Arts Department at Pierce College is comprised of the following disciplines:

Broadcasting

Cinema

Journalism

Photography

Public Relations

Of the five Media Arts disciplines, Journalism and Photography are currently the primary focus of the department. The reasons for this include their being the only disciplines:

- Offering associate in arts degrees.
- Taught by full-time faculty.
- To offer laboratory, or hands-on, experience to students.
- Creating "product," i.e., campus newspaper, magazine and web content.
- With advanced course offerings.

An Overview – the Future is 'Convergence'

Traditional news media and other providers of information worldwide **are** undergoing a dramatic transformation. A **frequently** used -- most easily understood – word for this change is **convergence**.

Giving individuals the skills to produce only print material, or to develop content for broadcast purposes only, is not enough. Similarly, training exclusively in still photography will leave our students unprepared to serve future consumers.

The following scenarios can help explain Convergence.

- A news reporter is sent to cover a story. She or he carries traditional "tools" of pen and notebook, but also carries a wireless laptop computer and **digicam**.
- Following the interview, the reporter writes up a brief story for online readers.
- She or he then returns to the office and does a 'stand-up' for TV broadcast, or is **filmed** in the field. This may go out via FM or cable transmission or also be put on the newspaper's **website**.
- The reporter returns to his desk in the newsroom and writes a full-length story for the next day's print edition.

A TV station reporter no longer travels with a "crew" – that is, cameraperson and **sound** person. With lightweight digital cameras, the reporter works alone, filming as needed, editing on location as needed, providing the necessary narration and setting up and standing in **front** of his own camera if his presence is required on-screen as part of his report.

Traditional still photographers will need to learn how to operate **digicams**, many of which will do double duty for shooting either streaming video or still photos. Editing video, photo selection and cropping, and caption writing will all be done "in the field."

Short-Term Goals (2006-08)

- Incorporate audio and visual feeds into the Roundup **website**.
- Revive The BULL magazine.
- Expand and promote Journalism **106** (Mechanics of Expression), a grammar class.
- Incorporate the department's five Sony **digicam** units into the curriculum of Journalism **202** and **218**, Photography **20** and **21**.
- Hire a probationary journalism teacher.
- Produce an online alumni newsletter.
- Host a gathering of Media Arts alumni, possible on the occasion of the move from Bungalow **0360**, where generations of journalism students began their careers.
- Update Cinema certificate, incorporating inter-disciplinary **courses**, and market it to the community.
- Expand the first-day survey given to Media Arts students to determine student interests in current and potential class offerings, as well as scheduling.

Long-Term Goals (2006-11)

- Initiate discussions with other disciplines and explore the possibilities of providing classes of use to their students.
- For example, Journalism 100 – Social Values in Mass Communication – might be added to the required or elective classes for students studying early childhood education.
- Create an interdisciplinary broadcasting news certificate. Include a speech class as one of its requirements.
- Hire a probationary photo instructor
- Expand the broadcast offerings.

Short-Term Facilities Goals (Fall '06, Winter '07)

Prepare a plan for vacating Bungalow 0360 and moving to the Village, to include

- Computers and Internet access
- Storage of files

Departmental Goals: The professional communicator of today needs to

Basic skills

- ***Gathering***
 - Collect assigned data from both primary and secondary sources.
 - Always use at least two primary sources when gathering story information.
 - Document when necessary with cameras, audio recording devices and careful notetaking.
 - Obtain diverse viewpoints on an issue or subject matter.
 - Seek additional confirmation for material which might be controversial or questionable.
- ***Critical reasoning***
 - By listening, observing and reading, determine the most important aspects of an issue or subject.
 - Determine between that information which may be common knowledge and that which may require attribution to named primary sources.
- ***Meeting deadlines***
 - Become aware of the various deadlines which must be met in order to deliver visual, audio or printed information to an audience in a timely manner.
 - Maintain a professional calendar and budget one's time adequately enough to accomplish both professional and personal **tasks**.
 - ***Always maintain accuracy***
 - Disseminate only that information for which the facts are accurate, **e.g.**, spelling of names, correct times, dates and places.

Media Arts Disciplines

Of the five Media Arts disciplines, Journalism and Photography are currently the primary focus of the department. The reasons for this include their being the only disciplines:

- Offering associate in arts degrees.
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- To offer laboratory, or hands-on, experience to students.
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Media Arts Enrollment

As a department, the Media Arts **Dept.** at Pierce College has always enjoyed one of the highest, if not **THE** highest, average classes sizes.

On one occasion, the largest single summer school class enrollment (96) was offered by Media Arts. It was a journalism class.

In Spring 2001, average class size in Media Arts was 50.31 students, well above any other department.

In the interest of instructor health, we have more recently capped enrollment at 50 or 55 in our broadcasting, cinema and journalism classes. Photo classes are capped at **35-40**, which is lab capacity.

Average CINEMA class size is approximately 40.

Average JOURNALISM class size is 21, with strong enrollment in entry-level classes and lower enrollment in advanced classes which produce the campus newspaper and magazine.

Average PHOTO class size is 32, with lower numbers in the advanced classes which help produce the college newspaper and magazine. **This** average is **expected** to rise with the hiring, starting in Fall 2006, of a full-time photo teacher.

The single PUBLIC RELATIONS class averages enrollment of 35, while the single BROADCASTING classes averages about 50 students.

Broadcasting

The only broadcasting course offered at Pierce, Broadcasting 1 (The History of Radio & TV Broadcasting), is a survey class offering an overview of the industry. There are no hands-on or technical classes.

With the establishment of a departmental Web site, attention should next be devoted to some form of broadcasting, or podcasting, via the web.

Cinema

Each of the three Pierce Cinema classes listed below is a survey course. The department offers no hands-on filmmaking classes at this point. Each class enjoys both CSU and UCLA transfer status, with Cinema 3 (**The History of Motion Pictures**) and Cinema 107 (**Understanding Motion Pictures**) transferring to CSU Northridge for film majors.

Predictably, all cinema classes draw large enrollments with a wide demographic spectrum. This is not surprising, given the appeal of the subject matter with Southern California (including the San Fernando Valley) being at the heart of America's motion picture industry. Our newest class, Cinema 104 (**The History of Documentary Film**), has also become a draw with the recent popularity of such documentary films as *Bowling for Columbine* and *Supersize This!*

There are no plans for any major expansion of cinema offerings at this point as there is no equipment or facility for such a venture.

If classes are added, the first would probably be a **screenwriting** class, followed by a course on foreign films.

Photography

An Overview – the Past

Photography classes at Pierce, until very recently, have been traditionally taught by traditional teachers at Pierce College. Both the color and black-and-white courses were taught utilizing "wet" laboratories, i.e., students developed their film in a darkroom using chemicals, and printed their pictures in a darkroom, using enlargers and **trays** of chemicals.

New York *Times* and The Associated Press – and teaching experience – at the Brooks Institute of Photography, where she spent considerable time developing curriculum for digital photography.

Connelly immediately began the process of restructuring the photo curriculum, seeking the support of the photo industry and writing proposals for laboratories and equipment.

5. The college president, who personally made the decision to hire **Connelly**, has fully endorsed the transformation of the photo discipline to its new format. He directed the then-vice president of Academic Affairs to provide proactive support to restore the program to its former prominence.

Photo curriculum:

Starting with the Spring 2007 semester, the department has been adding or restoring classes to the Photo curriculum.

Spring 2007: Journalism 220, Magazine Editing has been restored. The college magazine, The BULL, will again be published, this **time** as a publication with photo emphasis.

Fall 2007: Photography 49, not previously offered at Pierce, is an advanced digital imaging class. It will be offered in the new lab, VLGE 8300.

PHOTO SALON: This annual exhibit of student photography is returning to the Campus Center. The two-week **juried** exhibit is open to the public. Professional photographers judge entries in a dozen categories with cash awards presented to the winners.

For the first time, this exhibit will include multi-media presentations of student work, in addition to the traditional mounted color and black-and-white photographs.

MULTI-MEDIA: With the campus newspaper online through College Publisher, advanced students are beginning to utilize the department's Sony **digicams** to tape events and interviews for the publications as well as to add **DVD** and sound to the individual class assignments. Some will be included in the online publications, while others will be put up on the Media Arts **Dept. website**.

Spring 2008: Commercial Photography, Photo 16, will be returned to the curriculum. It will utilize the photo studio in VLGE 8300. Instruction will also include 6 hours devoted to the business aspects of being a self-employed or freelance photographer.

Fall 2008: Photo 27, the History of Photography, will be returned to the **curriculum**.

With Media Arts offering both photography and cinema classes, a digital editing class needs to be added. Final Cut **Pro** is currently the software used by professionals, but others will undoubtedly be developed as well.

Degree and certificate programs: These are being updated to reflect the transition to digital photography. As multi-media classes are adopted, these will replace older classes, such as Photo 17 (Color Photography).

These multi-media classes need to be reflected in updated degree requirements. Future employability will require applicants to be familiar with all aspects of journalism, evaluating and gathering news, plus editing and producing sound, words and images for the traditional and online publications.

New home: Ultimately, the Media Arts Dept. is slated to move into the college Life Science Bldg. (1700). This permanent home will include a photo studio, digital instructional lab and a production laboratory for the newspaper, magazine and their online components.

Additional faculty: The department will need to request an additional probationary photo instructor to teach the multi-media classes and another to teach the entry-level photo classes.

Expanding articulation agreements: Articulation has traditionally been with the CSU system, with one or two basic photo classes transferring to U.C. campuses meeting the Humanities requirements. As the curriculum is expanded, discussions have been initiated with Brooks Institute of Photography in **Santa** Barbara and **Ventura**. The Pierce articulation officer will also investigate public and private universities venture into such fields as "visual journalism" and "literary journalism."

Public Relations

Pierce offers a single P.R. class: Public Relations 1 (**Principles of Public Relations**). It draws good enrollment, always filling and utilizing computer lab 3220. This lab, created by a joint request **from** the Business Administration and Media Arts departments, facilitates student learning and research with its ability to provide timely access to current events, **websites** and other media-related information.

The P.R. instructor has been asked to develop a syllabus for Public Relations 2, a projects-focused class. This is advisable because of the fact that a greater percentage of journalism majors end up employed in the field of **P.R.** than in **journalism** itself.

Faculty: Up to 1999, the department employed five full-time faculty members with 2.5 of their overall teaching load assigned to photography and the other 2.5 to journalism. By the start of 2005, four of the five full-timers had retired or moved into administration.

Full-time Faculty

Robert B. O'Neil, Media Arts Dept. Chair
Professor of Journalism

Jill P. Connelly (Will begin teaching in the Fall '06 Semester)
Assistant professor of photography and journalism

Adjunct Faculty, by discipline:

Broadcasting: Vincent Brook, Ph. D.
Ken Windrum, Ph.D.

Cinema: Steve Anderson
Vincent Brook, Ph.D.
C. Mike McCulloch
Ken Windrum, Ph.D.

Journalism: Blanca Adajian
Stephanie Stassel Bluestein
Nataly Sosa

Photography: Randy Holmes
Rita Nessian Chaharbakian
Sean McDonald
Ken Neely (teaches only at Agoura High School)
Christine Valada
Roger W. Vargo

Public Relations: Stacy Long

U.S. Dept. of Labor

Bureau of Statistics

- 9 Photographers in the U.S.: 360,000
- 9 These include a variety of photo jobs in such diverse areas as medicine, architecture, defense, journalism, portraiture, design, automotive, event (primarily weddings), food, public relations and government (police, military).
- 9 Demand for traditional jobs will remain steady in this decade, except in the jobs for photo technicians (sales, repair, support), where growth is anticipated.
- 9 However, the Internet has resulted in a great demand for photo content and for individuals to create that content.
- Photography is unusual compared to most other occupations in that half of all professionals are self-employed.
- 9 Obtaining employment as a professional photographer is extremely competitive. Advertised positions draw numerous applicants.

Trends impacting photo education:

- ⇒ Popularity of digital cameras and numbers of people wanting to learn their proper use.
- ⇒ Requirement of basic still photography education is required of those in the film industry, specifically film majors at CSUN.