

### Spring 2016 Sabbatical Research

Spring 2016 Sabbatical was designed with two goals in mind. The first objective was to meet with four university photography departments: A&M University in Commerce, Texas; Texas Women's University in Denton, Texas; University of Texas at Dallas; and the University of Texas at Arlington. Meetings were scheduled to discuss photography departments, changes with digital technology, course content, transferability of Collin College courses, and knowledge/skill expectations of Collin College transfer students. The second goal was to work with each university in order to initiate articulation agreements that would establish a clear and comprehensive transfer path for Collin College students working towards a Bachelors of Fine Art Photography. Additionally, I had a set of components I aspired each articulation agreement to include.

- 1) The articulation agreement is arranged to ensure that Collin College students completes an Associates of Arts Degree from Collin College during their two-year term.
- 2) The articulation agreement incorporates MATH 1332 as the transfer math credit.
- 3) The articulation agreement includes at least two of the following courses as transferable credit courses: ARTS 1313 Foundations of Art, ARTS 2348 Digital Photography I, ARTS 2356 Photography I/ Darkroom or ARTS 2357 Photography II/Darkroom.

The spring semester began with contacting the four local universities and scheduling meetings. The first set of appointments I explained articulation agreements, I listed out the classes that Collin College Photography Department would like to have included in the articulation agreement, I supplied a list of all art and photography courses with course descriptions, and I stressed the importance to establish an agreement that would ensure that every Collin College student completes an Associates degree at Collin College before transferring to the named university. The initial set of meetings each professor and I examined our programs, course content, department direction, and what knowledge and skills their university expects a transfer student to have. Furthermore, all four universities have/have had Collin College photography transfer students; which granted us the opportunity to review Collin College students' skill set and opened the floor for suggestions or concerns. Each university applauded Collin College's Photography program. They all stated that our students transfer in successfully as sophomores with the appropriate skills set. The one area to address is students understanding of which courses transfer and how to adequately select the correct courses with transferring in mind. Therefore, the following meetings were designated to design articulation agreements that would guide students to a clearer transfer path and fulfill each institutions degree requirements. Working together each professor and myself constructed a draft of courses to follow two years at Collin College and the following two years at their university. At this stage both parties met with their faculty, advisors, and/or articulation office personnel to approve, advise, and suggest changes as needed. After numerous meetings and a plethora of e-mail communication, working together we created a final draft that all faculty and direct supervisors agreed on. Drafts were completed early summer submitted to Joe Butler in the articulation office at Collin College.

## Questionnaire Results

Initially I had a set of questions to ask each university professor; however, meetings took on their own style. Some meetings we addressed all of the listed questions while other meetings were more discussion based. While discussing our programs, I learned there were other items of concern that I did not list on the initial questionnaire. The results of the questions that each university felt were the most important to address are listed below.

### 1. How do students create the final project?

- A&M- conceptual series, not portfolio of assignments
- TWU- conceptual series, not portfolio of assignments
- UTA – conceptual series, not portfolio of assignments
- UTD- conceptual series, not portfolio of assignments

Currently, Collin College Photography Department requires all photography courses to include a final portfolio that is a conceptual based series. The conclusion is that this requirement meets the needs of transfer universities and we need to continue empathizing conceptual series based final portfolios.

### 2. Do you require students to learn printing techniques? How do students create work – print or screen?

- A&M– Critique by prints, not on screen. Required to learn printing. Only technical assignments may be viewed on screen and not printed.
- TWU– Critique by prints, not on screen. Required to learn printing. Stressed all critiques are print based not screen based.
- UTA – Critique by prints, not on screen. Required to learn printing.
- UTD– Critique by prints, not on screen. Required to learn printing. Required to learn large format 44” printing.

Collin College Photography Department emphasizes printing. All assignments and final projects are submitted as print base and not digital files or screen viewed. From the meetings I learned that the photography department should incorporate a large printing requirement.

### 3. What barriers do transfer students face?

- A&M – Knowing the latest version of software. Know how to complete a final portfolio. Retaking classes because a student took a class at a community college that will not transfer to A&M, not understanding what classes transfers.
- TWU – technical barriers, understanding PS. Said our transfer students are good, notices this with other schools. Know how to create a conceptual series final project.
- UTA – Some schools do not teach students to create a finished series of conceptual work.
- UTD – design, camera operations, know how to print digital and darkroom. Conceptual portfolio – final project. Taking classes at a community college that do not transfer for the degree at UTD.

All four universities applauded Collin College transfer students. Each professor shared that our students transfer in without lacking any skill sets. They applauded our program.

The only area that needs to be addressed is a system to assist student when transferring. Professors stressed the frustration when they gain a transfer student that is lacking transferable classes and yet have a 2-year degree full of non-transferable classes. Establishing articulation agreements is my goal to ease this confusion and establish clear and comprehensive paths for students.

4. Do you include video capture in a beginning digital photography class? Which program do you use? What levels of video capture do expect a transfer student to have?

- A&M – time lapse, still to motion. Video is DSLR video. Not in a beginning class.
- TWU – animated gift, DSL motion, Final cut Pro. Not in a beginning class.
- UTA – Final cut Pro. Not in a beginning class.
- UTD – Not in a beginning class. Once students are advanced they can use whichever software they prefer.

The photography department will implement its first digital video class Fall 2017. The information gathered will be beneficial to designing the new digital video course.

5. What digital software do you use? What software should transferring students know?

- A&M – DSLR, Photoshop, Light Room. Need to be familiar with all, but not masters.
- TWU – Photoshop
- UTA – Light Room and Photoshop. UTA does not specify when and which class – it is the professors choice. They want a student to know both by the end of their degree. It is fine if students transfer with PS only.
- UTD– Light Room, Photoshop. Wants transfer students to be familiar with both.

Collin College photography digital courses currently teach Photoshop. Faculty have been discussing when and how much Light Room to include. With the information gathered, we can continue our discussion with more knowledge of how to proceed. The photography department will begin to teach Lightroom spring 2017.

6. Do you include smart phone capture in a beginning digital photography class? If yes, to what extent?

- A&M – digital 1 – any camera. Digital 2, digital 3, all advanced - DSLR
- TWU – no
- UTA – Do not have a class that allows smart phones; however, advanced classes can use any camera choice that serves the project.
- UTD – yes it is similar to a “photography for non-majors” class. This class fulfills a class for understanding photographs for graphic design students and other areas that are not photography majors.

Collin College Photography department does not have a photography-for-non-majors class and we are limited to only two years of instruction. This limits the time frame in which we must teach all skills necessary for transfer students. The idea to bring in Smartphone capture is a topic we will continue to discuss and watch the transfer colleges to ensure we are staying abreast with skill sets expected of our students.

7. What equipment does the lab have?

- A&M – two 17” printers, one 44” cannon printer, print 60”. Color Monkey every Friday can use all paper types, 44’x64” dry mounting machine. Students print one large format print to understand producing large pieces.
- TWU – Epson and Mac, large and medium printers.
- UTA – 2 large format Epson digital (44”), 3 medium. Epson and Mac
- UTD - every 2 computers share a scanner. Large and medium printers. Each student must print 44” to learn working large.

The photography lab has both medium and large format printers. Large printing is only emphasized in one class. From these meetings I conclude that large printing needs to be incorporated more thoroughly in the program.

8. What barriers do students face with new technology?

- A&M – Students do not have the software or equipment to work at home, they need open labs with hours that accommodate their schedules.
- TWU – Not understanding the complexity of technology and software.
- UTA – Not knowing how to print.
- UTD – keeping software updated.

The digital lab stays current with software. The program needs to be certain that students leave with the correct skills of printing and understanding digital software.