Availability of Graphic Design & Desktop Publishing Careers in Kansas

by

Emporia State University
Introduction

Vocational funding in the state of Kansas has recently changed from VE2 funding to the Career Clusters model. With this change, only pathways with direct ties to job availability will be funded at the high school level. Therefore, the In-House Training class will no longer be funded after the year 2012.

Currently, the Chapman High School Business Department runs a very successful design and printing business called Irish Ink within its In-House Training class. This course is important not only to the school, but also to the community who frequently take advantage of Irish Ink’s services. By researching degrees, certifications, and jobs available for students who are interested in graphic design after high school, this study will help prove that even if the In-House Training course is not longer funding by the state, it still is a valuable course that prepares students for the real world.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to determine what degree programs and jobs are available for students interested in graphic design and desktop publishing graduating from high school in Kansas.

The specific research questions to be answered in this study are as follows:

1. What college graphic design programs are available in Kansas?
2. What type of jobs will be available for students interested in graphic design?
3. What are the requirements for graphic design jobs in Kansas?

Methodology (Procedures of the Study)

Searches were completed on Monster.com and KansasWorks.com to find jobs available for graphic design and desktop publishing. The key words used, separately, were “graphic
design” and “desktop publishing.” In addition, by searching on Design Training’s website (http://www.design-training.com/graphic-design/Kansas/), Kansas schools were listed that have graphic design programs.

A Literature Review: Qualifications Needed for Graphic Design & Desktop Publishing Careers

Introduction

Although both desktop publishing and graphic design careers utilize very similar skills sets, they do have some minor differences. Graphic designers, sometimes called, graphic artists, create layouts and designs for all types of media (SchoolScholarships.org, n.d.). Desktop publishers also create layout and design for different media, but desktop publishers will work with more text-based documents (Desktop Publishers, 2010-2011).

The first graphic design program at the college level was at Yale University in 1950 (Kelly, 2001). Kelly states that the program was designed as a four-year degree for students who wanted to become graphic designers. The degree was kept separate from the liberal arts program allowing students to be compared more to a professional as in the architecture program (Kelly, 2001).

More specific skills need in the desktop publishing field include editing and proofreading skills. Some desktop publishers even write stories that are included in their publications (Desktop Publishers, 2010-2011). According to the California Occupational Guides Employment Development Department (2002), desktop publishing has replaced the older typesetters and printers with computer layout software and specialists. On average, a desktop publisher completes jobs request, applies layout designs, edits photographs and pictures, and coordinates elements together in a document. Their normal workday can consist of working in an open
workstation with other employees or alone in an isolated cubical (California Occupation Guides, 2002).

Graphic designers utilize much more than just layout and design skills when working day to day. SchoolScholarships.org (n.d.) states that designers often have to utilize communication skills when working with customers. These communication skills must be fully developed, because often designers must deal with rejection of their first idea or design (Graphic Designers, 2010-2011). In addition to communication skills, graphic designers need more than just computer design skills. Mark Alan Anderson (2007) believes that pre-design on paper is just as important as the final computer layout of a publication. Even after learning all of the skills mentioned above, graphic design students at the university level will still learn at a production-based level; students will learn the best by focusing on practicing (Swanson, 1994).

Overall, a career of graphic design and desktop publishing will incorporate artistic layout design and publications. If a dedicated worker can make it through the long nights and hard demands of customers, they can have a rewarding career. According to Gretchen Coss (2007), graphic design is allowing businesses to create a “graphic identity” for their customers.

**Findings (Presentation of Data)**

After searching both Monster.com and KansasWorks.com, no jobs were available using the keywords “desktop publishing.” One job, in Table 1, was listed on Monster.com for a graphic design position, and 35 jobs were listed on KansasWorks.com when searching with the keywords “graphic design.” The top 10 positions found on KansasWorks.com are listed in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Graphic Design Jobs Available within 100 Miles from Chapman, KS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic Designer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic Designer Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic Designer Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic Designer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager Creative Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic Artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic Designer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic Artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo/Graphics/Multi-Media Technician</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Graphic design programs are available at six different Kansas schools for students who would like to pursue a graphic arts or graphic design degree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Art Institutes</td>
<td>Overland Park, KS</td>
<td>Graphic Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown Mackie College</td>
<td>Lenexa, KS</td>
<td>Computer Aided Design &amp; Drafting Technician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emporia State University</td>
<td>Emporia, KS</td>
<td>Bachelors in Fine Arts with concentration in Graphic Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Hays State University</td>
<td>Hays, KS</td>
<td>Bachelors &amp; Masters in Fine Arts with concentration in Graphic Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas State University</td>
<td>Manhattan, KS</td>
<td>Graphic Design, Illustration, Photography, &amp; Digital Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas University</td>
<td>Lawrence, KS</td>
<td>Graphic Design</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusions**

Based on the information gathered, students interested in pursuing a career in graphic design will be able to find degree programs and jobs in the state of Kansas. College programs are available at six different schools; four of the programs have specific graphic design degrees and the other two schools, Fort Hays State and Emporia State, have fine art degrees with concentrations in graphic design. After students complete a degree program, they will able to find jobs in cities such Wichita, KS; Lawrence, KS; Manhattan, KS; Riley, KS; Emporia, KS; and Junction City, KS.

**Recommendation**
According to the research gathered, students interested in pursuing a career in graphic design will be able to find both college degree programs and jobs in the state of Kansas. If the Career Clusters Pathway program no longer funds the In-House Training course, it will still be a worthwhile course for Chapman High School to offer.

Works Cited


Swanson, G. (1994). Graphic Design Education as a Liberal Art: Design and Knowledge in the

Pts. Given for Each Section

_2 pts._ Description title – 2 pts. possible
Accurately describes the study

_3 pts._ Introduction – 3 pts. possible
Clear and understandable, related to the research

_5 pts._ Statement of the Problem – 5 pts. possible
Clearly stated and covers all questions to be answered

_4 pts._ Methodology (Procedures of the Study) – 5 pts.
A larger sample would have provided results that could be generalized to a larger population
Clear, complete and appropriate methods used to gather data

_10 pts._ Review of Related Literature – 10 pts.
Adequate # of sources, sources related to the topic; clear and understandable writing

_10 pts._ Presentation of Data and Discussion – 10 pts.
Data presented in text and in tables was clear and understandable

_10 pts._ Implications of Study (Conclusions and recommendations) – 10 pts.
Drew logical conclusions based on the data gathered

_5 pts._ References – 5 pts.
Used appropriate style manual, references were complete and accurate

_49 Total Points = 3 pts. on conversion scale (See below.)

A = 45 pts. or more = 3 pts. on 3-point scale
B = 40-44 pts. = 2 pts.
C = 35-39 pts. = 1 pt.
D = 30-34 pts. = 0 pts.
Note: ½ point will be taken off for each grammar, spelling, punctuation, and clarity of writing error