

Message from the Chair: Current and Relevant

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In graphics our goal is clear; help students learn to visualize so they can ideate with themselves, communicate graphically with others, and communicate according to industrial standards. How we reach these goals is ever changing. In my thirty-four years of teaching graphics the most significant change in the curriculum has been the introduction of 3-D modeling. It has fundamentally changed the way students learn to visualize. But even with this fundamental change my preferred method of teaching graphics has not changed. The only way to learn graphics is to draw and/or model. My teaching philosophy reflects this principle. I call it my “Sink AND Swim” principle of teaching graphics. In a graphics course students do not want to listen to you talk about drawing – they want to do it! I believe students learn and retain graphic principles best when they are allowed to struggle with a problem on their own. After giving students the minimal amount of information to get started, I like to use my three favorite words in teaching “go to work”. This gives me the opportunity to become more of a coach and help students with their struggle. When they begin to sink we can reconvene and talk through the problem a little more. Then the process repeats itself until the task is completed. Ideally I prefer to have all my lecture/lab time entirely in the lab so I can give mini lectures when they are needed.

In order to help students as they struggle, we must keep ourselves current and relevant. With 3-D modeling as the tool of choice, it is a challenge to keep up with the ever present changes in the software. At times the problem is not keeping ahead of students it is keeping up with them.

Speaking of keeping current and relevant, changes in our division have taken place this past year through the leadership of some of our members. Our EDG journal editor Bob Chin continues to oversee the new challenges with transitioning our EDG journal into its online format. Our director of membership Kevin Devine has reported that our current membership is two hundred and fifty strong with four new members. Four may not appear to be a lot but this type of growth will keep our division strong for years to come especially if they become active members. Our vice chair Aaron Clark has provided us with the idea to combine the three executive committee directorships of liaison, professional and technical, and zones into the more current and relevant director of communications. This change will become official when we vote on new by-laws.

Two new executive members have been elected. Nancy Study was elected vice chair and Nick Bertozzi was elected director of communications. Both have proven leadership records in the division and we are leaving these two positions in good hands.

Thanks to the remaining executive committee members: Sheryl Sorby director of zones, Norma Veurink secretary-treasurer, and a special thanks to our vice chair Aaron Clark for stepping in for me when I took ill and had to leave the midyear early.