

Visual Communication Technology: 2012-13 Assessment Report

Mission and History:

The Visual Communication Technology program's mission is to prepare cross-media, adept practitioners with the knowledge, skills and processes to efficiently and effectively transmit ideas and concepts through a combination of interactive media, photography, print and video.

The VCT program is *unique* in the state and nationally. There is no other program in the State that includes the breadth of visual media through a problem solving and technological perspective. Our key functions are to offer theory and practice in the applications of visual media, including interactive media, print, video, and photography. Our program systematically integrates Computer Science, English, Technical and Scientific Communications, Business, Math, Art Design, and Interpersonal Communications to create linkages in the student's curriculum thus creating a total university experience. *University Strategy 1: Create distinctive coherent undergraduate learning experiences that integrate curricular and co-curricular programs.*

VCT students have multiple opportunities for co-curricular experiences throughout their program. These include:

- Via Media, project-based service learning;
- Visual Communication Technology Organization, a student run group;
- Research Group, volunteer undergraduate and graduate students;
- Cooperative education;
- Field experiences;
- Capstone/Synthesis Requirements; and
- Special projects.

These experiences are specifically planned and guided by faculty to provide meaningful, unique opportunities for learning. *University Strategy 3: Identify and pursue economic development and curricular engagement opportunities.*

We have prided ourselves with providing students with an important, relevant curriculum in the ever-evolving nature of the industries encompassing the VCT field. Through this innovative curriculum, students learn and apply their knowledge to be adept in each of the university learning outcomes. The Visual Communication field demands inquiry, creative problem solving, and value driven decision-making. Developing the expertise to communicate efficiently and effectively in written, online or presentation formats complements our students' applied program. By association with the professions, our students and alumni participate in and lead community and global initiatives. The cooperative education component of our program enables students to learn and apply knowledge throughout their undergraduate studies. This application of knowledge allows

a true synthesis and engagement of knowledge and skills before they graduate. We empower our students to be unique problem solvers and leaders within VCT fields as well as society. *University Strategy 2: Expand the student populations for BGSU enrollment and implement programs to recruit them and retain them to successful program completion.*

With the help of a faculty advisor, each student selects a media or cross-media specialization to enhance career opportunities. The program proceeds through a framework of analyzing and applying the many methods of creating, reproducing, and distributing visual communication materials. Students ultimately combine concepts, theories, and principles with critical and creative technical problem-solving abilities to generate solutions for visual communication problems.

By developing the ability to solve communication problems, students will be prepared for such technological production and management positions as graphic coordinator, digital media specialist, video producer or editor, interactive media producer, print/video/photo sales representative, packaging designer, or printing/publishing plant manager. Supervised cooperative work experience provides students with “real world” experience in their area of interest. *University Strategy 3: Economic development, curricular engagement.*

Upon completion of the baccalaureate degree, students in the visual communication technology major are expected to:

- Demonstrate critical-thinking skills as they relate to solving visual problems;
- Conceptualize and implement a visual solution in cross media modes;
- Demonstrate operational level skill ability in each of the visual media areas of VCT;
- Research and produce an organized written rationale for using a specific medium to solve a specific visual problem; and
- Apply knowledge of industrial applications to visual communication related technologies.

Assessment:

The VCT Program developed a faculty Assessment Committee to review learning outcomes, identify assessment measures, review data, and recommend actions. The committee collected data from four different sources.

1. We developed a set of questions and began collecting data consistently from current senior students during their final course. This course runs Fall, Spring and Summer session with a total of about 80 – 90 students per year.
2. Second, a survey was also sent to VCT alumni from the past 5 years and 72 students returned the survey.

3. The Advisory Board was a third source to provide input on curriculum, industry trends and future program direction.
4. Information from the current student co-op reports was also utilized.

As a result of the combined information, the faculty made the following changes:

1. Developed one new course, Research in VCT, to accommodate the need to for our graduates to expand their knowledge regarding the Learning Outcomes: “Demonstrate the ability to critically assess how technology is affecting contemporary industrial practices and culture” and “Demonstrate critical thinking skills as they relate to solving visual problems.”
2. A set of curriculum modifications were submitted to correct some prerequisite issues that related to Learning Outcomes: “Demonstrate operational level skill ability in each of the visual media areas of VCT” and “Demonstrate the ability to research and produce an organized written rationale for using a specific medium to solve a specific visual problem.”
3. Expanded some online options, including an online option for VCT 2040, and worked with Firelands Campus to offer some distance lectures and online options.
4. Updated Track documents and modified syllabi. Opportunities for collaboration between several courses were identified to provide more “cross-media” convergence in the program. We believe it will offer continuous improvement in the Learning Outcome: “Demonstrate the ability to conceptualize and implement a visual solution in several media modes.”
5. Expanded use of a portfolio from the sophomore year, VCT 2040, through the senior year, VCT 4670 was discussed and implemented. The utilization of more critiques was discussed and continuation of these was agreed upon. These actions address the Learning Outcomes: “Demonstrate a specific media area of specialization” and “Demonstrate the ability to conceptualize and implement a visual solution in several media modes.”
6. The importance of continual content evolution is key to keeping our students on the leading edge. The VCT Advisory Board met this spring and divided into “tracks”. Information was gathered and shared to update the course content in each track and also discussed new trends regarding equipment/software needs.

Assessment Report:

The following Assessment Form summarizes our assessment practices and has been used by our program for over 9 years.

VCT Assessment 2013 Report

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Methods	Inferences from Assessment	Actions Taken/Program Improvements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate critical thinking skills as they relate to solving visual problems. • Demonstrate the ability to conceptualize and implement a visual solution in several media modes. • Demonstrate operational level skill ability in each of the visual media areas of VCT. • Demonstrate the ability to research and produce an organized written rationale for using a specific medium to solve a specific visual problem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written and verbal critiques assess a student's ability to use critical thinking skills in order to solve visual problems. The critiques assess and evaluate both the technical as well as the conceptual aspects of the course. Tracking a student's critiques from one level to the next will show if there is significant improvement. • That the student has successfully completed the core curriculum indicates that he or she can conceptualize and implement in several different media modes. The core curriculum includes lab-based courses of theory and practice. Several projects in each course are built around conceptual problem solving in that particular medium. • Assessed by successfully completing the core curriculum courses. If a student does not demonstrate an operational level of competence, they cannot pass the course. • The capstone course for the program is the VCT Synthesis. To successfully complete the required client-proposal, a student would have to do the necessary research to select an appropriate medium and develop a sound rationale in order to "sell" the idea or concept to the client. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students' critiques of visual media still tend to be superficial at times. However adding critiques has made them aware of the need to be a consumer of good media and what makes good images. • Our students demonstrate that they are "media agile" and can shift from one media to another to meet the demands of the problem. This assessment helps us measure whether the students can participate in current industry requirements of "cross media" knowledge. (i.e. print piece generated from web interaction, etc.) • Core knowledge was then expanded by further developing the media concentrations including: photography, video, interactive media, and print. They are represented by a three-course sequence. • Students need to be more comfortable in their presentations. Communication within student teams needs improvement. Leadership skills could be better utilized. Students have good media production skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critiques related to both technical and visual content have been integrated into every lower division VCT course. Research course has been added to continue critical thinking skills. • Continuous improvements for Cross-course/track projects to solve broader media problems and integrating various media are regularly being explored, developed and implemented in the 2000 – 4000 level courses. Cross media between Print/web and Photo/print and Photo/Video have been expanded. Client proposal, group project utilizes cross media solutions. • VCT 2660, 3660 and 4820 are being re-evaluated based on feedback by the advisory committee and student evaluations. The print sequence is integrating cross media content with packaging curriculum added. • Six modules and a career assessment assignment, and online presentation are required in the Synthesis class. Poster sessions are conducted in Research and Sustainability courses. New text and new lectures address team communication.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate knowledge of industrial applications of visual communication related technologies. • Demonstrate the ability to critically assess how technology is affecting contemporary industrial practices and culture. • Demonstrate a specific media area of specialization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-op performance evaluations & semester reports assess the student's knowledge of industrial applications. Working with the Co-op office to monitor appropriate sites. Faculty complete assessments of the site. • Through written/verbal critiques and presentations students should demonstrate a "cross media" understanding that extends outside of the classroom citing current industry practices, innovations, trends and leaders and how these items are impacting the future of the industry. • Check sheet mandates. Portfolios. Specialization chosen in synthesis problem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some students need more help to choose co-ops that are appropriate for their career goals or their level of experience. Faculty supervision is improving student integration of their co-op with their program. • Students need to be more "media savvy" in current trends and how these trends affect their role within the industry. Students lack a general knowledge of media leaders, innovators and practices that have a trickle down effect on their own practices. • Students are required to choose a specialization track and may also opt to explore a second track in depth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisors are having regular conversations with students regarding their co-op opportunities. Co-op workshops have been added. In their reports they complete a narrative on what has been important to them in their program at BGSU. Data is shared each semester to make adjustments as needed. Discussed as part of VCT 2040 curriculum. • Continue to incorporate both individual presentations by students and lectures by instructors on industry leaders, trends and critiques in upper division courses. Industry leaders have been invited in as guest lecturers to discuss their business and answer student questions about particular industries, job opportunities, etc. We have also added professionals to lectures in the VCT 1030 class. New topics of sustainability has been added to address industry trends • Students are developing digital portfolios in the entry-level courses (VCT 2040, 2660, 2820, 2080, 2680) and encouraged to add artifacts from courses, co-ops, etc. Other courses integrate the portfolio as students update and refine the portfolio.
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Program: Visual Communication Technology

Submitted By: Donna K. Trautman, Interim Chair, VC&TE

I. Program Learning Outcomes (Completed by Program)

A. Program Learning Outcomes	Observable & Measurable		B. University Learning Outcome Alignment	Revised Learning Outcome(s) (if necessary)
	Yes	No		
1. Demonstrate critical-thinking skills as they relate to solving visual problems	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Inquiry <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Critical Thinking <input type="checkbox"/> Oral & Written Communication <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Literacy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engagement	
2. Conceptualize and implement a visual solution in several media modes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Inquiry <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Critical Thinking <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Oral & Written Communication <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Literacy <input type="checkbox"/> Engagement	
3. Demonstrate operational level skill ability in each of the visual media areas of VCT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Inquiry <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Critical Thinking <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Oral & Written Communication <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Literacy <input type="checkbox"/> Engagement	
4. Research and produce an organized written rationale for using a specific medium to solve a specific visual problem	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Inquiry <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Critical Thinking <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Oral & Written Communication <input type="checkbox"/> Information Literacy <input type="checkbox"/> Engagement	
5. Apply knowledge of industrial applications to visual communication related technologies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Inquiry <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Critical Thinking <input type="checkbox"/> Oral & Written Communication	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate the ability to critically assess how technology is affecting contemporary industrial practices and culture. • Demonstrate a specific media area of specialization. 			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Literacy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Inquiry X Critical Thinking X Oral & Written X Communication Information Literacy Engagement Inquiry X Critical Thinking X Oral & Written X X Communication X Information Literacy Engagement	
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C. Approval of Learning Outcomes:

The faculty of the VCT program have met and reaffirmed learning outcomes during the 2013-2014 AY. During a strategic planning meeting and a review of data, Advisory Board input and co-op employer comments, the learning outcomes as stated address the major program mission.

D. Communication of Learning Outcomes:

The learning outcomes are in the Catalog and the program website. Each course has course-level learning outcomes in the syllabi.

II. Multi-Year Learning Outcome Assessment Plan (Completed by Program)

A. Plan

Learning Outcomes	AY Year						
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>
	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Yes</i>
1. Demonstrate critical-thinking skills as they relate to solving visual problems	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2. Conceptualize and implement a visual solution in several media modes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes

3. Demonstrate operational level skill ability in each of the visual media areas of VCT	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4. Research and produce an organized written rationale for using a specific medium to solve a specific visual problem	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
5. Apply knowledge of industrial applications to visual communication related technologies	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
6. Critically assess how technology is affecting contemporary industrial practices and culture.	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
7. Demonstrate a specific media area of specialization.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

B. Rationale for Selection

Some of the learning objectives must be assessed each year to provide the feedback essential for curriculum changes. Other learning outcomes can be measured by a two-year cycle. This information also will be utilized for accreditation self study documents. Data and information will be gathered each Summer and Fall semesters beginning Fall 2014.

III. Learning Outcome Assessment Reporting Cycle (Table completed by Program and SAAC Representative)

Assessment Cycle	AY Year						
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
<i>Ex. Reporting Requirements A & B</i>	<i>B. SF</i>	<i>B. SF</i>	<i>B. LF</i>	<i>B. SF</i>	<i>B. SF</i>	<i>A. A or PR</i>	<i>B. SF</i>
Reporting Requirements (A/PR=Accreditation or Program Review; SF=Short Form; LF=Long Form)	A. ATMAE Accreditation (2 year report – Spring 2014)	SF	LF	A. ATMAE Accreditation Self-Study	SF	SF	LF