SITE NEEDS AND GOALS FOR PROJECT 3: GRC WEBSITE

Project Summary:

This is a redesign of the web pages for the Graphic Communications Department at TMCC. This site's purpose is to market the program to potential students and inform them of the scope and requirements of the program. Secondary goals are to inform current students of degree requirements, connect them with instructors, and showcase their work.

Audience Profile:

The audience is multi-faceted and will include both prospective and current students. Ages, genders, races, ethnic, and economic groups will vary widely. The unifying element will be an interest in art, design, and computers. Prospective and current students could be full-time dedicated students or part-time students who work. They might be interested in one class to learn specific computer design skills, or be interested in the whole program to start a career or retrain for a new career. They could also be creative artists wanting to broaden their ability to express their ideas. A high percentage of them will be computer savvy and frequent web users with a good internet connection.

This site should inspire perspective students to find out more about the program, as well as to empower them to believe they could participate and be successful. It should also make it easy for current students to get the information they need and make a connection to their instructors. For both groups, this site should be creatively inspiring, inclusive, clearly laid out, interesting, and persuasive.

Communications Strategy:

The overall message of the site should be informative and visually pleasing. It needs to convince perspective students that the program will be worthwhile through the use of good design principles. It should provoke interest and promote the image of success. A primary way to both inspire prospective students and support current students is to include intriguing and innovative work in the student gallery. Faculty web pages will give insight into the instructor's specialties and personalize their bio to help the student relate to them.

Competitive Positioning:

A survey of 75 U.S. Design School websites shows a shocking lack of innovation and good design in websites for these programs. Only a small percentage of sites are well-designed, mostly at private schools. Programs at public institutions, such as TMCC, all appear locked into the overall website of the school. A redesigned TMCC GRC website will certainly set it apart from public institutions and allow the program to compete with private schools for student interest.

Even with the lack of good design, most of the 75 websites have a way to showcase student work, which the current GRC website does not. A slideshow seems to be the favorite way of showing the student

work, so the redesigned site might want to include this on the gallery page, or on the overview page. The best sites incorporate background images/graphics and a few sites try to write copy/headlines that make the prospective student imagine themselves participating. The new site needs to incorporate this strategy. The new site also needs to have teacher bios or teacher websites that connect directly to the GRC pages, not off in another web location. And of course the new site needs to look like it has something to do with design.

Targeted Message:

GRC at TMCC rise to the top.