

JEREMY SWANSTON

SERVICE STATEMENT

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One of my primary responsibilities as a Graphic Design Professor is to actively contribute my skills, expertise, and effort towards the advancement of my program and field, as well as benefit my academic and local community. As reflected in both my teaching and scholarship, I believe that socially-driven design can have a significant human impact, and drives my service endeavors as a citizen designer.

In terms of my program, I have recently spent one academic year as Program Head of Graphic Design, where I worked with faculty, program staff, and students to build on the strengths of the Graphic Design program as well as identify strategic opportunities to incorporate emerging practices and technologies. Beyond creating the course schedule for the program, I also place high importance on ensuring instructional quality, and have worked closely with Teaching Assistants to oversee and support their teaching duties. Coordination with other Program Heads within the Studio Art Division, technology and print production staff, the Curriculum Committee, and Academic Advisors is a central component in delivering a high-quality program that ensures student satisfaction and success.

In terms of my immediate academic community, I have been dedicated in bringing my expertise as a designer to advance projects that benefit the School of Art and Art History. For example, I have worked closely with the Director and Administrative Staff to design a streamlined syllabus template that could be used by each division to organize and present key information in a standardized and easily-digestible format. Furthermore, I am currently designing a series of brochures for each academic program within the School of Art and Art History to highlight the diverse and vibrant programs of our school and facilitate recruitment efforts.

These past few years, I have also directly engaged in service that benefits my students and larger university community. Through my role as faculty advisor for the University of Iowa Students in Design (UISD) organization, I was instrumental in partnering students with various community and university members to collaborate on a variety of design projects. One recent example of such a collaboration involved leveraging connections with the International Writing Program (IWP) and UISD and leading the students through the opportunity to design and develop a web presence for the IWP's 50th anniversary. This website was promoted internationally as a retrospective to illustrate the program's accomplishments and provides a home for future expansion. Not only do such collaborations foster real-world experience, they provide a positive service to the university, and generate small funds the students can use for their own professional development, such as attending networking and workshop opportunities. Another fund-raising project that I initiated with the organization was having students partake in a poster competition, instilling the practice of disseminating their designs nationally.

In terms of both the university and local community, I have been instrumental in leveraging the design talent of our students by providing connections and artistic direction on projects that benefit

local causes. For example, I have partnered several upper level graphic design courses and with the Provost's Office of Outreach and Engagement to provide design services to community causes. As a result, I recently directed the student design of a tourism mobile app for Mason City, which guides the user to the various attractions, restaurants, and businesses within that community. As the goal of the city was to enhance economic growth, the app included extensive testing and prototyping, which assisted the Department of Computer Science to bring it to fruition. Similarly, in the Spring of 2020, we partnered with the city of Keokuk to design a new brand initiative for the city and its affiliated organizations, including tourism, commerce, and economic development.

It is also important for me to note that much of my research and teaching efforts focus heavily on service components, allowing me the opportunity to direct my professional activities towards positive service outcomes. For example, in the Spring of 2018, as part of a Spring Break Workshop, I co-lead a group of graphic design students in a collaborative partnership between the University of Iowa and Iowa State University, and the community of Perry, IA. This project was funded by a Community Impact Grant, and focused on utilizing graphic design resources, methods, and processes to engage the community of Perry, IA. Several design students from both universities worked together to identify areas for improvement and problem solve around specific economic, educational, health, and cultural challenges that are important to the community. The project culminated in an art exhibition that brought community members and leaders together with students to present the final collaborative solutions.

Another community project with a service-component, funded by the Roy J Carver Charitable trust, involved the utilization of Photovoice to illuminate Latinx students' experiences in Muscatine High School. Using a combination of photographs, narrative, and perspectives provided by the students, this project involved a community forum and art show to raise awareness about the students' experiences, while promoting positive change in the school community. This project was in collaboration with faculty from the College of Education, and is a good example of how design can be a crucial component of interdisciplinary service efforts.

My research endeavors and visibility in the graphic design field have also led to opportunities to be of service professionally. Recently, I served as an external reviewer for the AIGA Design Educator Community's publication, *Dialectic*. I was also recently invited to serve as Co-Chair for a series of presentations on the topic of Design for Emotion and Pleasure, hosted by the Applied Human Factors and Ergonomics International Conference. I look forward to additional service opportunities in my field that help advance the role of graphic design in socially-driven endeavors.

My passion for engagement and socially-driven initiatives has allowed me to build bridges between the Graphic Design program at the University of Iowa, other programs and units at UI, other Institutions that teach graphic design, as well as numerous local communities in need of service. I am looking forward to continuing my service contributions, and identifying impactful ways to elevate graphic design towards the greater good.