

# Section I: Program Overview

## A: The Mission of the Program and its Link to the College's Mission and Goals

### A1: Mission of the Photography Department

The Photography department provides students with technical and aesthetic fundamentals upon which students will build their artistic talent necessary for educational, professional and personal goals.

### A2: Goals of the Photography Department

The goals of the Photography Department are:

- to provide a wide range of classes within the medium
- to prepare students of Photography for transfer to 4-year institutions through articulated course offerings and AA and AS degree programs
- to provide general education classes in PH-25, the History of Photography
- to provide opportunities for personal enrichment and lifelong learning

## B: Historical Background and Unique Characteristics of the Program

### B1: Historical Background

Instruction in the Photography Department at Saddleback College began in 1977 within the Fine Arts division and was located in the bottom floor of the James B. Utt Library building. In 1979 the department was transferred into the Vocational Technical division and in 1980 the classroom and lab was moved to a temporary building, SA-1, located on the upper campus. In 1982, the program was returned to the Fine Arts division. The current classroom and lab have been upgraded over the years to provide the best possible learning environment. In 2001, the first digital photography course was offered in a computer lab in the Technology and Applied Science building. In 2002, the color photography course went to the digital lab where inkjet prints replaced the traditional wet lab processes. Today, we offer a full range of classes in the digital format as well as the traditional film based, and are beginning to introduce crossover classes between the two.

### B2: Unique Characteristics

The Photography department offers a comprehensive range of courses in traditional analog media (silver based film and paper) and digital lab and non-lab classes, including more advanced classes, where current issues in art can be explored. Photography courses are highly interactive - which allows for one-on-one communication between the instructor and student during studio/lab hours. This type of relationship is unique in the learning environment.

Certificated instructors (MA or MFA degrees) have significant professional experience and are highly involved in the commercial and/or art world.

### C: Progress since the Last Program Review

This is the first formalized Program Review in which the Photography Department has participated.

### D: Current Strengths, Opportunities, and Challenges

#### D.1: Current Strengths

The Photography Department at Saddleback College has various strengths.

The History of Photography class fulfills the general education requirement and is transferable to 4-year institutions. Many courses fulfill lower division requirements at four-year schools, specifically: PH-50, Introduction to Photography; PH-55, Intermediate Photography; PH-51 Introduction to Photoshop and Digital Imaging. The success rate for our classes has been remarkably high as shown in the Program Review Data Set for Photography. The Photography department's "success" rate since the spring of 2001 has averaged 73.75%. The "retention" rate average for the same period is 82.83% (Appendix, page XX).

Our digital imaging classes are equipped with the most current version of the dominant photo editing software (Adobe Photoshop). They are taught in state-of-the-art Apple Mac labs, which output images on the latest Epson inkjet printers using archival inks. The traditional photo lab utilizes high-level enlargers and equipment for processing film and producing the highest quality gelatin silver black and white prints. This combination of technologies provides students of diverse backgrounds, ages, and goals, the opportunity to increase their skill levels in photography, which can be applied in both personal and professional areas.

In addition to having earned advanced degrees, our faculty represents a broad range of experience in both the fine art and commercial art world. The faculty range in age, from 26 to 60, providing a diversity and depth in style and approach conducive to creating a quality program.

The strong commitment and dedication to student education is apparent in the quality of the student work produced.

#### D.2: Current Opportunities

### Digital Photography

In the last decade, digital photography has become the dominant format for image generation in the world. Concurrently, student interest in this area has grown as well. The demand for these skills at home and in industry has increased dramatically. This presents a unique opportunity for curriculum development in photography, which employs a synthesis between traditional and digital approaches.

Redirecting old resources and adding new ones in this area is a way to integrate various aspects of photography with art and design and move forward in this rapidly changing field.

There are seemingly endless possibilities for digital media. For example, faculty and students in different disciplines might work together to develop and create digital media projects for a variety of courses as a better means of communication. Conversely, they might pursue a more creative vision in combining disparate subjects in entirely new and surprising ways, expanding our understanding of contemporary art.

### Traditional Photography

There is strong continued interest in our traditional photography courses. Surprisingly, even though the digital format is highly sought after, our traditional classes still continue to fill all sections and typically have petitioners. Incoming students recognize the importance of learning basic photographic skills of composition and light without the aid of a software program to alter or fix the image. We will continue to offer classes on all levels and explore photography as it evolves. We are also noticing a resurgence in antique and alternative photographic processes like Van Dyke prints and salt albumen prints, and will explore offerings in this area in the near future.

We will also explore combining digital and traditional methods, which is in its nascent stage of development.

Our programs greatest opportunity, is in the various syntheses of traditional and contemporary modes of visual expression which will be open to new methods and ideas while keeping photography current in the art and commercial worlds.

## D.3: Current Challenges

### Traditional Photography

Since 1980, we have been restrained from expanding our program and increasing our full and part time faculty and course offerings. This is due solely to the limited space in the classroom and lab, which are in the same building. Planning is currently underway to move to a new location on lower campus, which will solve many of the aforementioned problems and help us reach our potential, especially if we are presented with resources to grow into the emerging methods and technologies.

### Digital Photography

A built in feature of digital photography is the rapid change of technology: in cameras, computers, and software. In order to keep current, we must continually upgrade both the hardware and software sides of this technology, and also employ faculty that can teach these ever changing skills. The Mac lab that we use has 30 workstations. This is far too many students for one teacher. With a skilled lab tech present, it could be possible to teach this many students, but ideally, the class size should be limited. Given the complexity of mastering both software and hardware, along with the need for on-on-one interaction, and the ever-present technological hardware problems, a class limit of 25

students would allow the faculty and staff to work more successfully with students. Another challenge for the program that pertains to both traditional and digital formats, is that of developing a contemporary aesthetic through involvement in current exhibitions, literature, and the web (as a resource) to help identify emerging directions in the field of art and photography. Balancing this with technical knowledge and the application of skills in the commercial world will maintain a vital and adaptive department.

## **Section II: Review Report**

### **A. Faculty and Staff**

1. Staffing Structure.

Current staffing includes one full time instructor who serves as the department chair, and 6 part-time instructors. One 29 hour/week, 10 month classified senior lab technician. One 20 hour/week, 8 month lab technician. One Dean.

2. Full-time to part-time ratio

Our department offers 16 classes; the full-time instructor teaches 6, and part-time instructors teach 10. The ratio for the Spring 2007 semester is 3:5. This has been the norm for 30 years. Adverse elements for students with part-time instructors in this ratio include limited access to, and lack of scheduled office hours for part-time instructors.

3. Changes needed in Administration, Faculty, and staff.

When we move to a new and larger location, adding another full-time instructor would allow the program to grow in the new facility. In addition another full time faculty member would add credibility.

The current senior lab tech is a 29-hour, 10-month employee. This needs to be a 40-hour position, which would allow an extra day of classes and labs. A more efficient lab would be enabled, as well as providing support for an increase in offerings and faculty.

The second lab tech is a 20-hour/week position. As the digital program grows an additional 20-hour lab tech, would provide assistance and maintenance in both the digital and traditional labs.

B. Curriculum and Instruction

1. Our department offers an Associate degree in Photography.

The History of Photography course fulfills the general education requirement and transfers to four-year institutions. Introduction and intermediate level courses in the studio and digital classes transfer to private art schools, colleges, and universities.

Photography program: Associate degree. 4 transfer courses: Photography 25, 50, 51, 55. Also offered: Photography 152,160,190, 200, 201 for skills upgrade.

2. Our courses serve the mission of the college in many ways.

They satisfy (1) transfer and (2) general education requirements to four-year schools. (3) They also are very popular in the community for students wanting to improve their skills, enhance their creative abilities and gain a greater understanding of the visual arts. (4) They also function as professional retraining for the photographer who is moving towards digital photography.

3. We currently assess the curriculum and course offerings within the department and make changes according to faculty and student input and feasibility.

4. The formalization of Student Learning Outcomes has provided information analysis

by which we can evaluate learning objectives in our classes. We are looking at the results and will implement the necessary changes as needed.

In the last 6 years we have incorporated the digital program into our course offerings with a positive outcome. The college and the dean have been supportive in this area. We also have allowed some cross over technologies in our traditional courses beginning in the last year. This strategy will create new methods of instruction and curriculum as we go forward, keeping students abreast of current trends in the field. Because learning photography is a one-on-one process in the studio and the lab, it does not lend itself to distance education. However, it may be possible to create an online course for PH-51, Introduction to Photoshop and Digital Imaging. The drawback is that learning a visual software application is more difficult without immediate instructional input. We have eliminated one course in the last 10 years (Color Slide Photography) and replaced it with its digital equivalent. Essentially, we moved the color photography course out of the traditional lab and into the digital lab. We would like to offer more digital format classes and a studio lighting class, which would require a studio shooting space with natural and artificial lighting.

### C. Student Success

Aside from the courses that satisfy transfer and major requirements, we find that most students enroll in Photography courses to upgrade personal visual skills and/or investigate an art form that is accessible without prerequisites. Therefore, our students come from a variety of backgrounds and diverse skill levels. Skills learned in Photography enable students to be more confident in their pursuits, whether that be professional or personal.

Data in the appendices of this report reveal the following positive indicators. The overall average course success rate for the past five years is 73.8% for all Photography classes. Fluctuations occur in the different semesters. Fall classes averaged 73.8% while spring classes averaged 69.6%. Our first summer class in 2006 had a success rate of 91.9%. Retention averaged 90.4 in the fall and 89.9% in the Spring, and 97.3% in the Summer. These numbers have remained constant in each of the past five years.

Gender differences for all courses over the same five-year period indicate a female population of 58.1% compared to 42.1% male. Historically, females are about 10% higher in number than males in all semesters. The dominant age group is 18-21 years with 49.3%. 22-25 years is 14.3%; 26-35 is 12%; 36-50 is 11.5%; and 51-65 is 9.1%.

Ethnicity breakdowns show 7% Asian and 10% Hispanic. While the Hispanic population has remained constant over the five-year period, the Asian population has been growing steadily at about 1% per year.

Average class size has also remained relatively constant during the data set period. This represents stability within the program offerings and accessibility to the community. Though the department has very few students completing the degree program, there is a significant number of students who proceed to professional careers and an even greater number who transfer to four-year schools.

### D. Facilities, Technical Infrastructure, and Resources.

The traditional photography classroom and lab are located in the SA building. The space is less than adequate to accommodate the minimum number of students required. It has been noted that some students drop the class after one or sessions because of the crowded conditions. The digital classes use the TAS computer lab. The TAS lab is very adequate in size and is current technologically. We share this room with the rest of the TAS division, which can often present a scheduling problem. The photo lab is also very complete with sufficient equipment in 19 workstations. We are lacking a high quality video projector and screen. It is extremely important to show the full range of tones and colors of the photographic image in lecture. The projector in the computer lab is very good, however, students in the last two rows have great difficulty seeing the cursor on the screen. This impairs learning.

Although there are open lab periods in the photo lab, there are none for the digital classes. This would require a lab technician proficient in all the software applications taught in those labs. However, we feel this is very important to the mission and goals of the college.

As the photography program evolves, newer and more spacious facilities will be mandatory.

### **Section III: Needs Assessment**

#### **A. Human Resource Needs**

The photography department has one full-time faculty member. A larger facility would allow for a second full-time faculty member. Part-time faculty currently provides excellent instruction for all the evening classes. The ratio is 1:6. Staff support consists of one 29 hour and one 20 hour position. It would benefit the department to increase the position to a full-time status. This has been a standing request since 1990.

## B. Instructional/Service Needs

In the traditional photolab, established course offerings are continuing, with special topics offered as needed. In the digital area, we will continue to update and offer new courses as new technology and software prescribe.

Staff personnel provide the main support in the photolab. The computer labs and the computers in the photolab are supported by the college IT staff. There is only one IT staff member to service all the Mac labs on campus. The college needs 2 Mac technicians.

## C. Research Needs

The photo department is continuing to follow existing instructional program research and development areas. There exists the need to continue and expand these important aspects.

- (1) Continue with ongoing institutional evaluation and improvement efforts
- (2) Continue departmental efforts with the program review process
- (3) Maintain and further develop Student Learning Outcomes
- (4) Expand efforts to promote and market instructional programs
- (5) Promote the department and program at the college web site to enhance enrollments

## D. Technical, Equipment and Other Resource Needs

Photography, in the last 10 years has undergone a major change in the way that images are recorded. The move to the digital format is inevitable in the near future. (We estimate 5 years). This semester, we are replacing our 35 year-old cameras with new models, which will use traditional film, and new lenses. (New lenses will also fit digital camera bodies).

We will need digital camera bodies when we transition over.

New software (and upgrades every 1.5 years) will be added to the list, which will include printers and ink, scanners, servers, and projectors.

## Facilities Needs

Current planning (Fall 2007) is for the photography program to move to a re-locatable building on lower campus. We need to be in a permanent building near, or next to, the art department (Fine Art division). We will need 2 fully equipped computer labs, a studio for shooting, storage, faculty offices, an office space for adjunct faculty, and a check-out room with office for technical staff.

#### E. Marketing and Outreach Needs

Photography classes have always filled all sections offered. Our traditional film classes are still in demand and these classes continue to fill every semester. Digital offerings are becoming very popular and are now filling every semester. Special courses are marketed through in-class promotion and through course descriptions in the schedule of classes.

Marketing exists in the schedule of classes and promotional brochures, and at the college website. Word-of-mouth through photography stores as well as current and past students are very good representatives and promoters of the program.