

Panel: "Town and Gown: Printmaking as Agent of Discourse and Collaboration"  
Abstracts of panel topics

Alison Filley (panel chair)  
Coordinator of Studios and Outreach Programs  
St. Ambrose University

With declines in enrollment some art departments are now actively recruiting incoming freshman. I will discuss how St. Ambrose University utilizes hand printed marketing materials and live printmaking events to highlight the program, educate the community about what a print is, draw attention to the print facilities, and ultimately help increase enrollment. The art department also works with First Year Experience to offer a learning community for incoming freshman that integrates book art assignments into core freshman courses: *Introduction to Drawing* and *English Composition*. These projects introduce freshman students with various majors to the book arts and can lead to increased enrollment in the Book Arts major and in other courses throughout the art department. I am also actively involved in freshman advising through *New Student Seminar*, a one credit extended orientation course that is integrated into the learning community. With this course I am able to integrate art and book making concepts through journaling assignments tied to the common curriculum for all *New Student Seminar* courses. My presentation will focus on various recruitment strategies utilizing printmaking techniques, the integration of book arts into freshman Learning Communities, and the importance of advising through New Student Seminar.

Jeff Abshear  
Director, Kalamazoo Book Arts Center  
Adjunct Professor, Western Michigan University

As the founder and director of the Kalamazoo Book Arts Center (KBAC) and an Adjunct Professor in the Frostic School of Art and Lee Honors College at Western Michigan University (WMU) I have seen how book arts can act as a conduit that connects diverse departments within academia and the larger community. The KBAC is a nonprofit organization funded by local, state, and national foundations including the Michigan Council for Arts and Academic Affairs and the National Endowment for the Arts. We have established a relationship with WMU and Kalamazoo College and offer classes, exhibitions, and other educational programs including workshops with local public schools and youth organizations. We support the work of artists and writers by offering visiting artist residencies, poetry readings, and collaborative printing projects and publications. We combine these activities with an internship program in which students receive academic credit with our partner institutions, and a study abroad program to Italy through the WMU

Haenicke Institute for Global Education, to create an organization with a national and international scope. During this presentation I will speak about the founding of the KBAC, the programs we offer, and our collaborative relationship with educational institutions.

Joseph Lappie  
Assistant Professor, St. Ambrose University  
Founder and Curator, The Bakery Gallery

The Book Arts Program at St. Ambrose University fully embraces and actively disseminates the idea that a book/paper/print shop is a unique space for community activity, artistic discovery, personal growth, and what Johanna Drucker would (hopefully) consider a teeming “zone of activity”. We collaborate with innovative international, national, and regional partners; The Peace Paper Project who presents “Panty Pulping”, showing the transformative social and political value of papermaking and gender equality; Vamp & Tramp, explaining the interdisciplinary capabilities of the artist book; The Figge Art Museum, whose goal is to bring art technique, understanding, and history to everyone, affordably. Our program strives to present youth facilities, area businesses, art organizations, high schools, and our university campus with the benefits of the processes that excel in multiplicity and mutability through visiting demonstrations, cheap local workshops and tours of our facilities. These activities are visually and mentally stimulating, hands-on events, requiring interdepartmental involvement and include steamrollers, carnivals, indigenous fibers, interactive making, and exploratory exhibitions.

Yet, there still is a need for more. What is “more”? How do we integrate it into our programs, our schools, and our society? I’ll share what we strive for and hope that you provide us the same.

Melissa Wagner-Lawler  
Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design  
University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee, Peck School of the Arts

With lower enrollments in print and book programs, what strategies can be employed to keep these critical courses running? This portion of the panel will examine ways to incorporate printmaking processes and artist book assignments into required Foundation courses to generate interest for upper level courses during the first year of college. Another obstacle that prevents courses from running is pre-requisites. How can courses be restructured and cross-listed to allow for increased enrollment while still requiring basic technical skills? Examples of courses run at the

Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design will be presented to highlight ways to increase student interest in courses struggling with low enrollment.

Finally, budget concerns jeopardize print and book programs from even being introduced, especially at the K12 level. Due to limited or non-existent budgets, printmaking can be ignored due to the perceived expense of each process. Methods for using found or inexpensive materials and community print shops as resources in the face of limited budgets will be explored.