The Impact of the Graphic Communications Outreach and Recruitment Program on the GC Identity

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THE IMPACT OF THE GRAPHIC COMMUNICATIONS OUTREACH AND RECRUITMENT PROGRAM ON THE GC IDENTITY

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate School of
Clemson University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science
Graphic Communications

by
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May 2024

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ABSTRACT

The present study evaluates the impact of Clemson Graphic Communication's Outreach and Recruitment program on high school students' perceptions of the major and their college and post-college opportunities. Through surveys and events sponsored by Outreach, the research aims to determine the overall influence of the GC program. Participating students, accompanied by their instructor and guardians, will visit Godfrey Hall, Clemson University's Graphic Communications building. Before the trip, students must complete a comprehensive survey gauging their understanding of the Graphic Communications program and its industry. During the visit, students will engage in rotational activities to experience the daily practices of Graphic Communications students. A panel discussion will allow students to pose questions to current Graphic Communications students about the program and broader college life. After the trip, students will participate in a post-event survey to assess how the experience enriched their knowledge of the program and the graphics industry. The findings from this study suggest that the Outreach event played a valuable role in enhancing participants' understanding of Graphic Communications, broadening their awareness of its applications and career opportunities, and stimulating interest in pursuing a career in the field. These insights can inform future outreach efforts and curriculum development strategies to engage students better and promote awareness of Graphic Communications as a viable career path.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am genuinely grateful to Mrs. Carla Marchione and Mrs. Michelle Fox, who collaborated with me over the past year to strategize and coordinate the Outreach events. Their invaluable assistance, guidance, and network connections were pivotal in executing numerous successful events. I also want to express my appreciation to my fellow Outreach students, who wholeheartedly supported my innovative ideas and dedicated countless hours outside of class to ensure the seamless execution of the events.

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INTRODUCTION

The present study investigates the impact of the Graphic Communications Outreach and Recruitment Program on the Clemson Graphic Communications identity. The research done in this study determines whether Clemson Graphic Communication's Outreach and Recruitment program has an impact on high school students' perspectives on the major, as well as their opportunities during and after college, and the overall GC program through surveys and Outreach sponsored events. The student participants embark on an educational excursion accompanied by their instructor and any accompanying guardians to Godfrey Hall, the building dedicated to Graphic Communications at Clemson University. Before the field trip, students must complete a comprehensive survey to assess their understanding of the Graphic Communications program and its associated industry. Once at Clemson University, the students will be afforded the unique opportunity to engage in a series of rotational activities, affording them firsthand exposure to the daily laboratory practices of Graphic Communications students. The high school students will go through four rotations, where hand-selected Graphic Communications students will educate them in areas of Flexography, Offset Lithography, Dye-Sublimation, and Screen Printing. High school students can produce the same projects as our Graphic Communications students in a classroom setting. Students will learn how stickers, notepads, air fresheners or magnets, and pennants are produced through the print process in the rotations. A panel discussion will also be conducted, granting the students the chance to pose inquiries to current Graphic Communications students, encompassing queries about the program or broader aspects of college life. Graphic Communications students will discuss markets and careers within the graphics industry, courses in the curriculum, and popular minors associated with the major. Following the field trip, students will be expected to partake in a post-event
survey to evaluate how much the experience enriched their knowledge of the program and the graphics industry.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Graphic Communications Background

The expansive reach of the graphic communications industry significantly impacts the daily lives of most individuals. Its influence extends to a wide array of products, ranging from computers and medical supplies to business cards and billboards, packaging, photographs, and even the design on a car’s dashboard or a t-shirt. (Smith, 2014). Graphic Communications, as its name suggests, is the act of conveying messages through visual elements. These elements include symbols like glyphs and icons and visual components such as drawings and photographs. The contextual impact of substrate, color, and surroundings may also play a role. This process involves creating, producing, and distributing content that blends words and images to express information, ideas, and emotions. The graphic communications industry differs from the graphic design industry; graphic design focuses on the creative design process, whereas graphic communications focuses on producing and delivering graphic products and messages (Luttropp & Greenwald, 2009). The field of graphic communications covers every stage of each process. It starts with the conception of an idea involving design, layout, and typography. It continues through reproduction, finishing, and the distribution of two- or three-dimensional products or electronic transmission.

Clemson University Department of Graphic Communications

The Clemson University Graphic Communications Bachelor of Science degree equips students for professional roles in printing, publishing, packaging graphics, digital media, content creation, and the broader communication industry. The comprehensive curriculum adopts a
holistic approach, guiding students from creative conception to realization. The program allows students to develop academically and professionally by covering all significant printing and visual communication processes. This journey includes two internships, offering invaluable real-world experience and thorough career preparation (Welcome to the Department of Graphic Communications, n.d.).

Clemson University Outreach and Recruitment Program

The Clemson Outreach and Recruitment class was started in Fall 2018 by Michelle Fox and consists of a dedicated group of students enthusiastic about offering K-12 students an immersive glimpse into life as a Graphic Communications student at Clemson University. These students actively engage with the local community by participating in different events. The goal of the Outreach and Recruitment Program is to spread awareness and clear up misconceptions about the industry.

Outreach attends events such as elementary and middle school activity nights and STEM, science, technology, engineering, and math nights. STEM nights, for instance, provide opportunities for students and families to engage in hands-on science, math, and engineering activities, showcasing various STEM topics and connections to exciting career paths in STEM fields. During these events, typically, outreach students teach screen printing or ink testing because it can be easily explained to them.

Selected Outreach students also have the chance to visit high schools to address misconceptions about graphic communications and raise awareness of our program at Clemson University among students, teachers, and guidance counselors. When they visit these high school career centers, the students have a panel discussion with the students, discussing relative topics and answering any questions they may be asked. The Clemson students also showcase materials,
including items created to promote the Outreach Program or completed class projects. This gives high school students insights into the opportunities awaiting them if they pursue further education. While the students engage in discussions, Clemson instructors have the chance to provide additional training to other teachers on equipment they may require to enhance their expertise.

Additionally, high school students are invited to Godfrey Hall to experience a typical day as a Graphic Communications student, participating in rotations and gaining insight into laboratory activities relevant to the major. They will also have the opportunity to interact with current Graphic Communications students, posing questions about courses, college life, and any other inquiries they may have. The Outreach event focused on demonstrating four different printing processes – screen printing, flexography, offset lithography, and dye sublimation. These processes chosen for the rotations aimed to give students a general idea of what their time would look like going through the graphic communications program. The goal was to demonstrate what approximately, each year of their college career would look like. Dye sublimation and screen printing are typically learned during a student's freshman or sophomore year. The basics of flexography are also learned during this time but are focused on heavily throughout one's junior or senior year, along with offset lithography.

*Screen Printing*

Screen printing is a process that involves the application of ink through a mesh screen onto a substrate (*Screenprint*, 2018). A stencil is created by rendering specific screen areas impermeable to ink, allowing ink to pass through only in those areas, forming the desired printed image (*Screenprint*, 2018). The screen has a fine mesh fabric tightly stretched over a metal or wooden frame. Stencils can be composed of and applied to the screen in many ways. However,
in Godfrey, the design is created using Adobe Illustrator, and the file is taken through steps to ensure it is in the correct format to export to the Kodak Trendsetter, which prints the film used for the stencil. The screen must be prepared using a scoop coater to apply layers of photosensitive emulsion before the stencil can be applied to the screen. After the screen has dried, the film is positioned on the screen, and it is then placed in the Lawson LED-5000 exposure unit. The exposure unit emits ultraviolet light that hardens the emulsion around the image. The emulsion covered by the design remains soft and is washed out using water, leaving the design on the screen (Screenprint, 2018). Once the screen has dried from washout, Quik-Dry water removable block-out is applied to cover any imperfections on the screen where one may not want the ink to come through. Once the screen has been prepared, it is placed on the carousel press, which has hinges to hold the screen in place. Ink is then applied along the top of the screen and pulled evenly across the screen using a squeegee to push the ink through the screen onto the substrate (Screenprint, 2018).

**Flexography**

Flexography is a versatile printing process that is capable of printing on various materials and sizes. It encompasses printing everyday items we encounter, such as cereal boxes, bottle labels, potato chip bags, frozen food bags, newspapers, and so much more (ETools : Printing Industry – Flexography, n.d.). The flexographic printing process operates similarly to a rubber stamp and ink pad but is more advanced and conducted on a larger scale. A soft, flexible photopolymer printing plate goes through the plate-making process, including exposure, imaging, and processing. The plate first goes through back exposure, which hardens the back of the plate to create a strong foundation. The plate is then placed in the imager, and a laser transfers an image onto the plate. The plate is then put back in the exposure unit to harden the
face of the plate. The plate will then be moved to the processor, where layers of the plate are burned away to create a three-dimensional raised mirror image of the design. In the final preparation of the plate, it will be placed back in the exposure unit for a last round of hardening. Each plate represents an individual color to be printed so that each plate will be trimmed and mounted on a plate cylinder. Stations for each color are assembled on the Comco Captain flexographic press, where the ink will be transferred from the rubber roller to the anilox roll and then to the plate and substrate.

**Offset Lithography**

Offset lithography, also known as offset printing, is a printing method based on the repulsion of oil and water (*Offset Lithography*, n.d.). This process involves transferring ink from a plate to a rubber blanket, which then transfers the ink onto various substrates to create high-quality images and designs, often used for mass production. Offset lithography includes printing large quantities of newspapers, brochures, stationery, magazines, and boxes (Iverson, 2023). During this process, files are prepared and sent to the Kodak Trendsetter to produce the lithographic metal plates. The Ryobi 3304HA offset printing press will be prepared for production, and once it is ready, plates can be inserted into the press, followed by the addition of ink.

**Dye Sublimation**

The dye sublimation process finds widespread application in the textile industry for mass-customizing garments with unique designs. This method suits the textile market well because it involves digital printing, allowing for distinct designs on each garment. With advancements in ink and printer technologies, this process has been increasingly adopted in other sectors where mass customization is sought after (Makenji, 2011). Dye sublimation starts with liquid ink that
prints an image onto a carrier and transfers it onto a substrate. When the image carrier is placed on the substrate and heated up by the heat press, it causes the ink on the carrier to sublimate and turn into a gaseous state (What is dye sublimation? - and how does it work?, 2021).

College Ambition Programs and Career and Technical Education Programs

From childhood aspirations of professions to high school expectations of attending prestigious universities, the desire for higher education remains widespread among adolescents (Lomax, 2015). However, the perceived attainability of these aspirations often differs from reality, especially regarding admission to elite institutions. Despite socioeconomic backgrounds, most students aspire to earn a four-year degree, highlighting the pervasive influence of societal expectations (Lomax, 2015). Yet, a lack of information about college major options and admissions criteria contributes to unrealistic expectations. The complexity of selecting a college that aligns with academic strengths, personal preferences, and family resources underscores students’ challenges in navigating the application process. The College Ambition Program (CAP) has developed a specialized training initiative for students visiting college campuses to assist them in assessing how well a college aligns with their expectations. Unlike other programs that may limit campus visits to high-achieving students, CAP offers this opportunity to all students without charge, leveraging support from local programs and foundations to cover associated expenses. After each visit, students undergo preparatory sessions to familiarize themselves with what to observe on campus and which questions to pose to admissions staff. This initiative has proven invaluable, particularly for students who have never set foot on a college campus despite residing nearby. Feedback from evaluations of these college visits indicates that, for some students, the experience has significantly influenced their perceptions of the campus environment where they believe they would thrive and feel a sense of belonging. (Lomax, 2015).
The educational sector has responded to the demand for a proficient workforce by integrating vocational education into secondary schooling. Vocational education, or Career and Technical Education (CTE), equips students with both academic and technical expertise essential for immediate employment in existing or emerging industries or for furthering their technical education at the postsecondary level (Gaunt, 2005). All courses are provided at a single site in career technical high schools. Still, the curriculum is more specialized—all classes center on career and technical education programs, complemented by essential academic subjects. Area career technical centers provide technical programs at a different site from the high school. Core academic subjects, physical education, and arts courses are offered and taken at the student's "home" high school. Typically, students split their day between their home high school and an area center. Recruitment strategies are very common with these centers. According to Gaunt, "A variety of marketing strategies are consequently used to positively impact aspiring students, including visits and tours to the area center, brochures and other promotional materials, websites with pertinent information on programs and opportunities, outreach efforts by area center staff into the local schools, and the nurturing of partnerships with the business/industrial community." (Gaunt, 2005).

The CAP and CTE initiatives aim to prepare students for college by engaging them in pre-college activities, college tours, and other strategies to raise awareness of programs and opportunities, mirroring the objective of the Clemson Graphic Communications Outreach program.

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research aids in formulating hypotheses by delving into profound insights regarding real-world issues. The Qualitative Study states, "Qualitative research gathers
participants' experiences, perceptions, and behavior. It answers the hows and whys instead of how many or how much" (Tenny, Brannan, & Brannan, 2022). Qualitative research focuses on open-ended questions that allow participants to explain how, why, or what they were thinking, feeling, and experiencing during an event (Tenny et al., 2022). The researcher will focus on discovering common themes or patterns between participants when analyzing the data. Qualitative research employs structured and unstructured interviews, focus groups, and participant observation. It aids in generating hypotheses, which can subsequently be rigorously tested through quantitative research.

Additionally, qualitative research helps researchers interpret quantitative data, discern their significance, and grasp their implications. It offers insights into situations that are not easily classifiable, enabling a deeper understanding of complex phenomena (Grossoehme, 2014). The data for this research was collected through surveys.

**Methods**

*Research Methodology*

Due to the nature of the research questions, the design of this study results in qualitative data. Qualitative data delineates attributes or features, often gathered through questionnaires, interviews, or observations, and commonly presented in narrative format (All guides: Data module #1: What is research data?: Qualitative vs. quantitative, n.d.). Examining qualitative data can present difficulties owing to its subjective character. This data type typically consists of descriptive language, which researchers can explore for recurring patterns or significance, often utilizing coding methodologies. Coding allows researchers to structure qualitative data into distinct categories, aiding in identifying themes pertinent to the research inquiries (All guides: Data module #1: What is research data?: Qualitative vs. quantitative, n.d.). Qualitative research
presents distinctive prospects for comprehending intricate, nuanced scenarios characterized by interpersonal ambiguity and diverse interpretations. While qualitative research may not offer conclusive solutions to such intricate inquiries, it can furnish a more profound comprehension and be a starting point for subsequent targeted investigations (Austin & Sutton, 2014).

**Advantages and Disadvantages of a Qualitative Approach**

Qualitative research presents distinctive opportunities for comprehending intricate, nuanced scenarios characterized by interpersonal ambiguity and diverse interpretations. While it may not answer complex questions definitively, qualitative research can enhance understanding and serve as a launch pad for further focused work. Effective qualitative research involves various frameworks, methods, and considerations, typically beginning with self-reflection and articulating the researcher's positionality. While some may perceive qualitative research as intuitive and straightforward, others may find it daunting due to its reliance on direct interactions between participants and researchers. Additionally, some may view qualitative research as subjective and unscientific, leading to skepticism about its reliability. However, these perspectives often stem from a lack of understanding of how rigorous qualitative research is conducted. When executed rigorously, qualitative research provides unique insights into the social and clinical realms we navigate (Austin & Sutton, 2014).

**Identification of the Population and Sample**

The population selected for this study was high school students throughout the upstate of South Carolina. High schools and career centers were selected with courses relating to graphic communications, such as business, digital design and art, and image editing. High school students were chosen as the target population for this study to enhance awareness of the Clemson University Graphic Communications major among individuals interested in this
field or possessing prior knowledge in the subject area. Teachers were notified via email to inform and extend invitations to their classes for the Outreach Event. Although four schools in the upstate region were invited to participate, the sample for this research study is derived from a single high school. These results are from other schools that did not demonstrate interest in the event in the time allotted for this research.

*Survey Design and Creation*

The survey questions were created with the help of Michelle Fox and Carla Marchione, the Outreach and Recruitment instructors. The questions were developed based on topics discussed and questions asked by students during previous outreach events. The questions on the pre-event survey were catered to discover whether or not the students had prior knowledge of graphic communications, the courses to be completed in the program, and the work fields one could enter upon graduation. The post-event survey questions determine if the students' perspectives changed or if they gained any new insights from the event. The survey questionnaires were administered on paper so that time spent on the surveys could be controlled and to ensure students did not look up answers online or talk to one another. The pre-event survey can be seen in Appendix A, and the post-event survey can be seen in Appendix B.

*Procedures*

The project's nature presents minimal risk to the human participants. Nonetheless, to safeguard their interests, confidentiality was upheld, and consent for the study was secured from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Clemson University. Additionally, the researcher underwent online training to conduct research involving human subjects and obtain IRB approval. Since the study involves minors, parent consent must be received for each student to participate, and photos and videos must be taken during the event.
The outreach events occurred in Clemson University's Godfrey Hall, where participants would spend approximately four hours learning about graphic communications. Upon the students' arrival, they were welcomed on a tour and given an explanation of the survey and its questions. After working independently to complete the written survey, introductions were conducted to all students and faculty involved in the outreach course. This allowed the visiting students to get a general idea of each GC student's interest areas and process what Graphic Communications encompasses. When the introductions were completed, students were split into small groups to participate in a rotational series of activities, which allowed them to experience what a day in the life of the Graphic Communications major would look like. The students participated in four 25-minute rotations, during which the outreach students discussed their definition of graphic communications and a condensed version of the process. Those processes were demonstrated, whether offset lithography, flexography, screen printing, or dye sublimation. Visiting students received the opportunity to work closely with the outreach students and ask questions before all came together for an hour-and-a-half-long lunch and panel discussion. During the interactive panel discussion, topics such as course curriculum, internships, college life, graphic communications careers and markets were discussed, and students were encouraged to ask any questions they may have. Once the panel was concluded, students were given a second written survey to, once again, independently complete.

Data Analysis

As the pre-event and post-event surveys were conducted by hand, they must be entered digitally to initiate the data collection process. The students' pre-event and post-event responses were input into a spreadsheet, ensuring that answers for each question were systematically organized. Responses regarding skills and career interests were compiled into charts and tables to
communicate the data visually. For open-ended questions, common words or phrases were found between students' responses to determine results. These common words and phrases were then turned into word maps to display the frequency of the keywords. A SWOT analysis is a tool that is utilized to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of a specific project or research (Raeburn, 2024). A SWOT analysis was conducted to assess the current state of this research and identify areas for improvement in future endeavors.

RESULTS

PRE-EVENT SURVEY

QUESTION 1: What is your definition of graphic communications?

This question elicits the respondent's understanding and interpretation of "graphic communications." It invites individuals to articulate their own personal definition or conceptualization of this field, which encompasses various forms of visual communication, such as graphic design, printing, typography, and multimedia design. Responses to this question can provide insights into individuals' diverse perspectives and perceptions regarding the scope, purpose, and significance of graphic communications in different contexts.

Based on the responses provided, there is a diverse range of perspectives on the definition of graphic communications. Some respondents mentioned specific activities such as designing and printing graphics, creating designs for marketing purposes, and making graphics for companies or organizations. Others emphasized the role of graphic communication in creating visual materials like posters, t-shirts, logos, and advertisements, as well as its importance in creative marketing and communication through imagery. Several respondents mentioned broader concepts such as designing anything related to art, planning, and creating things, as well as communicating through visual elements. Some respondents admitted not knowing much about
graphic communications, while others provided more general descriptions like "making stuff" or "printing stuff."

The responses indicate that graphic communications encompass various activities related to designing, creating, and communicating through visual means, focusing on marketing, advertising, and creating visual materials for companies or organizations. The responses also highlight the importance of creativity and visual communication skills in graphic communications.

**QUESTION 2: Circle the skills necessary to succeed in this field.**

This question prompts respondents to identify and highlight skills they believe are essential for success in graphic communications. It requires individuals to review a list of skills and indicate those they perceive as critical for thriving in graphic communications-related roles. This question serves as a means of assessing the respondent's understanding of the competencies required for effective performance in graphic communication professions while also providing insights into their perceptions of the industry's skill requirements.

The responses to the question about skills necessary to succeed in the graphic communications field indicate a variety of skills that respondents believe are important for success in this industry. Many respondents mentioned software applications such as Illustrator, InDesign, Photoshop, and Lightroom. These tools are crucial for graphic design, layout creation, photo editing, and digital asset management. Verbal and written communication skills were frequently mentioned. Effective communication is essential for collaborating with team members, conveying ideas to clients, and presenting work professionally. Several respondents highlighted time management skills. Meeting project deadlines and managing multiple tasks efficiently are essential aspects of success in the fast-paced environment of graphic
communications. Respondents mentioned skills related to problem-solving and troubleshooting, such as identifying and resolving issues in the pre-press or press operation stages of printing. Creativity was consistently cited as a crucial skill, and each respondent listed creativity as needed. Graphic communications professionals need to be able to generate innovative ideas, design visually appealing materials, and adapt to changing trends and client preferences. Several respondents emphasized the importance of attention to detail, particularly in tasks like drawing and writing. However, estimating and pre-press operations were two of the least listed skills. Precision and accuracy are essential for ensuring high-quality output in graphic communications. Some respondents mentioned giving and receiving constructive criticism as a critical skill. Being able to evaluate and improve upon one's work, as well as provide feedback to others, contributes to professional growth and quality assurance.

Overall, the responses demonstrate that success in the graphic communications field requires a combination of technical proficiency, communication skills, creativity, problem-solving abilities, and attention to detail. These skills enable professionals to create impactful visual materials, collaborate effectively with others, and navigate the industry's complexities.
**QUESTION 3:** What types of markets do you relate to graphic communications?

This question explores the respondent's associations between graphic communications and various markets or industries. It encourages individuals to identify and describe sectors or segments where they believe graphic communications are relevant or significant. Possible responses may include advertising, publishing, packaging, branding, digital media, and marketing. This question helps researchers or practitioners understand how different individuals perceive the applicability and impact of graphic communications across different market contexts.

From the responses provided, several themes emerge regarding the types of markets that respondents associate with graphic communications. Many respondents mentioned advertising as a market related to graphic communications. This includes social media marketing, product design, food marketing, and new product promotion. Graphic communications are crucial in
creating visual materials for advertising campaigns and marketing efforts. Some respondents mentioned the business sector as a market associated with graphic communications. This includes small businesses, big brands, and businesses in general. Graphic communications is essential for businesses to communicate their brand identity, promote their products or services, and engage with their target audience. Respondents also identified markets with a creative side, such as photography and clothing brands, as relevant to graphic communications. These industries use graphic communications to create visually appealing content, including logos, branding, and promotional materials. A third of respondents indicated they were unsure or did not know which markets are related to graphic communications. This suggests a lack of familiarity or awareness about the various industries and sectors that rely on graphic communications for visual communication and marketing purposes.

The responses reflect the diverse range of markets and industries that utilize graphic communications for various purposes, including advertising, branding, marketing, and visual communication. Additionally, the responses highlight the importance of graphic communications across different sectors in conveying messages effectively and engaging audiences.

**QUESTION 4: Are there any specific career paths associated with this major that you are aware of?**

This question assesses the respondent's knowledge and understanding of potential career opportunities in graphic communications. It invites individuals to identify and describe specific career paths or job roles they are familiar with, which are commonly pursued by graduates with a background in graphic communications. Responses may include roles such as graphic designer, print production manager, web designer, packaging specialist, marketing coordinator, art director, and many others. This question helps the researcher gauge the respondent's awareness
of the diverse career options available within the graphic communications industry and their perceptions of the profession's career prospects.

Several specific career paths associated with the graphic communications major were mentioned in the responses provided. Three respondents identified graphic design as a career path associated with the graphic communications major. Graphic designers create visual concepts, using computer software or by hand, to communicate ideas that inspire, inform, and captivate consumers. Photography was also mentioned by approximately 30 percent of respondents as a career path related to the graphic communications major. Photographers capture images that visually communicate messages, stories, and emotions, often for commercial or artistic purposes. Four respondents identified marketing and advertising roles. These careers involve promoting products, services, or brands through various channels, including print, digital, and social media, often utilizing graphic communications techniques. A few respondents mentioned career paths in business and management. These roles may involve overseeing creative projects, managing teams, or running graphic communications-related businesses. One respondent mentioned teaching as a potential career path associated with the graphic communications major. Educators in this field may teach graphic design, photography, or visual communication courses. Two respondents mentioned brand and logo design as career paths related to the graphic communications major. These professionals focus on creating visual identities for companies or brands through logo design, branding materials, and marketing collateral. Over a third of respondents indicated they were unsure or did not know what career paths are associated with graphic communications.

In general, the feedback showcases a wide array of career avenues linked with the graphic communications major. These paths encompass graphic design, photography, marketing,
advertising, business, teaching, and branding. Professionals in these fields leverage skills in visual communication, design, creativity, and marketing to effectively convey messages and captivate audiences.

**QUESTION 5: Can you name some of the courses or subjects covered in this major?**

This question prompts respondents to list specific courses or subjects typically included in a curriculum for a graphic communications major. It encourages individuals to recall and identify key topics or areas of study within graphic communications. Responses may include courses such as graphic design fundamentals, typography, color theory, printing technologies, digital imaging, web design, packaging design, marketing, accounting, and management. This question helps the researcher understand the respondent’s familiarity with the content and scope of coursework typically associated with a graphic communications program.

The responses provided show a mix of familiarity and uncertainty regarding the courses or subjects covered in the graphic communications major. Less than a fourth of the respondents indicated that they did not know or were unsure about the specific courses or subjects covered in the major. This suggests a lack of familiarity or awareness about the curriculum and coursework associated with graphic communications. Photography was mentioned by almost half of the respondents as a course or subject covered in the graphic communications major. This indicates an association between graphic communications and photography, suggesting that photography may be a significant component of the curriculum in some programs. Approximately 20 percent of the respondents mentioned marketing and advertising as courses or subjects covered in the major. This suggests that marketing and advertising principles may be incorporated into the curriculum to give students a comprehensive understanding of visual communication and branding strategies. A few respondents mentioned graphic design as a course or subject covered
in the major. This aligns with the core focus of graphic communications, which often includes the study of design principles, typography, layout, and visual communication techniques. Individual respondents mentioned creative writing and 3D printing, indicating potential interdisciplinary aspects of the curriculum or specialized courses offered by the graphic communications major.

**QUESTION 6: List the types of printing processes you know.**

This question prompts respondents to list various methods or techniques used in the printing industry to reproduce text and images onto different substrates. It encourages individuals to recall and identify specific printing processes they are familiar with. Responses may include techniques such as offset printing, digital printing, flexography, gravure printing, screen printing, and sublimation printing. This question helps the researcher assess the respondent's knowledge and understanding of different printing methods and their applications in graphic communications.

From the responses provided, it is evident that there is limited knowledge or awareness about the types of printing processes among the respondents. Over 70 percent of respondents indicated that they did not know or were unsure about the types of printing processes. This suggests a general lack of familiarity or awareness about the various techniques used in the printing industry. Some respondents mentioned specific printing processes, such as screen printing, 3D printing, heat press, and sublimation. These respondents provided more general terms like heat press without specifying a particular technique. While these responses indicate some awareness, they represent only a tiny subset of the wide range of printing processes available.
The responses highlight a need for greater education and awareness about the types of printing processes among the respondents. This could be addressed through targeted educational initiatives or resources to provide information about the different printing techniques used in various industries. Additionally, it underscores the importance of incorporating printing process knowledge into relevant educational curricula to better prepare students for careers in graphic communications and related fields.

**QUESTION 7: How interested are you in a career in graphic communications?**

This question seeks to gauge the respondent's enthusiasm or inclination toward pursuing a profession in graphic communications. It prompts individuals to reflect on their interest in working in roles related to graphic design, printing, visual communication, or other areas encompassed by the graphic communications industry. Responses may range from indicating a strong interest or passion for pursuing a career in graphic communications to expressing little to no interest in such a career path. This question helps the researcher understand the respondent's aspirations, motivations, and potential career goals in graphic communications.

The responses to the question regarding interest in a career in graphic communications range from 2 to 10, with the average response falling around 4-5. A significant portion of respondents have a moderate interest in pursuing a career in graphic communications, which indicates that while they may be somewhat interested, they may not be fully committed or passionate about pursuing this career path. Three respondents provided higher ratings, indicating a strong interest in pursuing a career in graphic communications. These individuals may have a genuine passion for the field and are more likely to seek opportunities and actively further their education in this area. Five respondents gave lower ratings, suggesting a limited interest in pursuing a career in graphic communications. This may be due to a lack of familiarity with the
field, a preference for other career paths, or a perceived lack of opportunities or benefits associated with graphic communications careers.

*Figure 2. Pre-Event Interest Chart*

![Pre-Event Interest Chart](image)

**POST-EVENT SURVEY**

**QUESTION 1:** Did the outreach event change your perspective on graphic communications? If yes, how?

This question aims to assess the impact of the Outreach event on the respondent's perception of graphic communications. It invites individuals to reflect on whether their views or understanding of graphic communications were altered due to attending the event. If the respondent answers affirmatively, they are prompted to elaborate on how their perspective changed. Possible responses may include gaining new insights into the field, developing a deeper appreciation for its applications, or considering career opportunities they hadn't previously
considered. This question helps the researcher evaluate the effectiveness of the outreach event in influencing participants' perceptions and attitudes toward graphic communications.

The responses to the question about whether the outreach event changed perspectives on graphic communications were varied, with some indicating a shift in perception and others maintaining their initial views. Several respondents mentioned that the outreach event helped them better understand graphic communications. They learned about the variety of careers available, the hands-on nature of the field, and the different processes involved. This suggests that the event provided valuable insights into the industry and its complexities. Some respondents expressed an increased interest in graphic communications due to the outreach event. They found the field more interesting, fun, and creative than they initially thought. This indicates that the event effectively showcased the appeal and potential of a career in graphic communications, sparking curiosity and enthusiasm among participants.

On the other hand, a few respondents mentioned that the event confirmed their perceptions of graphic communications. While they may have learned new information or gained a deeper understanding of the field, their perspective remained unchanged. There were also mixed reactions among respondents, with some expressing uncertainty or ambivalence about pursuing a career in graphic communications despite attending the event. These individuals may have found certain aspects of the field appealing but still have reservations or conflicting interests in other areas.

Overall, the responses suggest that the outreach event had varying effects on participants' perspectives on graphic communications. For some, it was an eye-opening experience that increased their understanding and interest in the field. In contrast, others may have had their
initial perceptions confirmed or remained undecided about pursuing a career in graphic communications.

**QUESTION 2:** Circle what skills you identify as skills you need to be successful in this field.

Comparing the responses from the pre-survey and post-survey questions about the skills necessary to succeed in the graphic communications field reveals some notable trends. In the post-survey responses, a broader range of skills is mentioned than in the pre-survey. While both surveys emphasize skills like written and verbal communication, Adobe software proficiency (Illustrator, InDesign, Photoshop), and creativity, the post-survey includes additional skills such as determination, pre-press knowledge, press operation, time management, estimating, troubleshooting, and critique. This suggests that participants may have gained a deeper understanding of the specific skills required for success in graphic communications through the outreach event or other experiences during the study period. There is a notable emphasis on technical skills related to graphic communications in the post-survey responses, such as pre-press operations, press operation, color management, and software proficiency. This indicates that participants may have become more aware of the technical aspects of the field and the importance of mastering specific tools and processes. Some respondents in the post-survey highlight personal qualities like determination, time management, teamwork, and troubleshooting skills as essential for success in graphic communications. This suggests increasing participants' awareness of the importance of soft skills, personal attributes, and technical proficiency. Despite the expansion of skills mentioned in the post-survey, core skills like communication, creativity, and hardworking remain consistently emphasized across both surveys. This indicates that these skills are universally recognized as fundamental for success in the graphic communications field.
**Figure 3. Post-Event Skills Chart**

**POST-EVENT SKILLS CHART**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Pre-Event</th>
<th>Post-Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critique</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardworking</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color Management</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troubleshooting</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimating</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Management</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Press Operation</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lightroom</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-press</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Communication</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determined</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photoshop</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InDesign</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrator</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Communication</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 4. Pre-Event vs. Post-Event Skills Chart**

**PRE-EVENT VS. POST-EVENT SKILLS CHART**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Pre-Event</th>
<th>Post-Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critique</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardworking</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color Management</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troubleshooting</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estimating</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time Management</td>
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<td>Press Operation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lightroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-press</td>
<td>15</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Communication</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Determined</td>
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<tr>
<td>Photoshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>InDesign</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Illustrator</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Communication</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
QUESTION 3: What types of markets do you relate to graphic communications?

Comparing the responses from the pre-survey and post-survey questions about the types of markets related to graphic communications reveals several insights. The post-survey responses demonstrate a more comprehensive understanding of the diverse applications of graphic communications across various markets. While some pre-survey participants mentioned specific markets like photography or advertising, the post-survey responses encompass a more comprehensive range of sectors, including business, marketing, management, labeling, logos, design, production (e.g., stickers, clothing, books), and even mentioning all markets. This indicates that participants may have gained a broader perspective on the relevance of graphic communications across different industries. Both pre-survey and post-survey responses highlight the significance of graphic communications in branding, advertising, and design-related fields. However, the post-survey responses further emphasize the importance of graphic communications in areas like labeling, logos, and overall visual representation across various markets. This suggests a heightened awareness among participants of the critical role played by graphic communications in shaping brand identity and visual communication strategies. While some pre-survey responses expressed uncertainty or limited understanding of the markets related to graphic communications, the post-survey responses demonstrated a more confident and inclusive perspective. Participants in the post-survey recognize graphic communications as relevant to virtually all markets, indicating a broader appreciation of its universal applicability in modern business and communication practices. Despite expanding ideas in the post-survey, specific core themes persist across both surveys, such as the association of graphic communications with marketing, advertising, and design. This consistency suggests that
participants maintain a fundamental understanding of the central role of graphic communications in these areas, even as their awareness of its applications broadens.

Overall, the comparison between the pre-survey and post-survey responses indicates a progression in participants’ understanding of the diverse markets and applications associated with graphic communications. Participants have moved from more limited or uncertain perspectives to more comprehensive recognition of its significance across various industries and sectors.

QUESTION 4: Were there any career paths associated with GC that you found surprising or did not previously consider?

Analyzing the answers provided in both the pre-survey and post-survey regarding particular career paths linked with the graphic communications major unveils several observations. In the pre-survey responses, participants exhibited a narrower understanding of the potential career paths associated with graphic communications. Responses mainly included mentions of careers in art and design-related fields such as graphic design, photography, advertising, and clothing design. However, in the post-survey, participants displayed a broader perspective, identifying diverse career paths beyond traditional design roles. Responses included mentions of careers in business, marketing, management, production, branding, and marketing, indicating a more comprehensive understanding of the versatility of the graphic communications major. While some pre-survey responses mentioned careers in marketing and advertising, the post-survey responses emphasized the importance of graphic communications in business-related roles. Participants identified careers in business management, marketing management, social media management, and product advertising, reflecting an enhanced awareness of the strategic and promotional aspects of graphic communications within corporate environments. The post-survey responses highlighted the role of graphic communications in product design, packaging
design, labeling, and brand management. Participants recognized graphic communications as integral to creating visually appealing products, designing adequate packaging, and establishing brand identities across various markets. This suggests a deeper understanding of the impact of graphic communications on consumer perception and brand recognition. Despite the expanded awareness evident in the post-survey responses, some participants still expressed uncertainty about specific career paths associated with graphic communications. This indicates that while participants' understanding may have broadened, there may still be gaps in knowledge or awareness of the full range of career opportunities available.

The comparison between the pre-survey and post-survey responses demonstrates a progression from limited and design-centric perspectives to a more comprehensive understanding of the diverse career paths and opportunities associated with graphic communications. Participants' awareness has expanded to encompass business, marketing, branding, and product design roles, reflecting a deeper appreciation of the multidisciplinary nature of the graphic communications major.

**QUESTION 5: Were there any courses in the GC program that you were unaware of?**

In the pre-survey responses, participants displayed limited awareness of the specific courses or subjects covered in the GC major. Many responses indicated uncertainty or lack of knowledge about the curriculum, with several participants stating, "I don't know." Some participants mentioned general topics such as photography, marketing, advertising, and graphic design, but there was little mention of specific courses. In the post-survey responses, participants expressed a newfound awareness of courses or subjects in the GC program that they were previously unaware of. Some participants explicitly stated that they were unaware of any courses in the program before participating in the outreach event. Others mentioned flexography, design,
management, technological/mechanical, and business-related courses. This indicates that participation in the outreach event helped to inform participants about the breadth of courses offered in the GC program. Several post-survey responses highlighted courses such as flexography, design, management, and business that participants were previously unaware of. This suggests that the outreach event provided valuable information about the curriculum and coursework involved in the GC major, leading to increased awareness among participants.

Despite some participants recognizing specific courses in the post-survey, responses still indicated uncertainty or a lack of understanding of the curriculum. Some participants responded with "I don't know" or mentioned that they were unaware of any courses in the program. This suggests that while some participants gained new awareness through the outreach event, others may still have limited knowledge of the courses offered in the GC program.

The analysis of both pre-survey and post-survey data indicates that engagement in the GC outreach event led to heightened familiarity with the courses and subjects encompassed within the major. Although some participants retained uncertainties, others acquired fresh perspectives on the curriculum, signaling the event's efficacy in educating students about the GC program.

**QUESTION 6: List the types of printing processes.**

There is a notable increase in the number of printing processes mentioned in the post-event survey compared to the pre-event survey. In the pre-event survey, responses primarily consisted of "I don't know," indicating a lack of knowledge about printing processes. However, in the post-event survey, respondents listed various printing processes such as screen printing, lithography, flexography, sublimation, and offset lithography. This suggests the event may have provided attendees with information about different printing techniques. The post-event survey responses demonstrate a more comprehensive understanding of printing processes, with
respondents mentioning a wider range of techniques. These include traditional methods like screen printing, lithography, and other technologies like sublimation and 3D printing. This indicates that the event likely covered diverse printing processes, exposing participants to different technologies and methods used in the industry. Despite the increased knowledge evident in the post-event survey, some respondents still mentioned "I don't know" when asked about printing processes. This suggests that while the event may have expanded attendees' knowledge to some extent, there are still individuals who remain unfamiliar with certain aspects of printing technology. Screen printing appears to be the most commonly mentioned printing process in both the pre-event and post-event surveys. This indicates that screen printing is a well-known and prominent technique among respondents, possibly reflecting its widespread use in various industries.

Overall, comparing the pre-event and post-event surveys highlights the event's positive impact in increasing participants' knowledge and awareness of different printing processes. The event likely provided valuable information and exposure to various techniques, contributing to a more informed and educated audience regarding printing technology.

QUESTION 7: How interested are you in a career in graphic communications?

Overall, there is a noticeable increase in interest in a career in graphic communications between the pre-survey and post-survey responses. In the pre-survey, interest levels varied, with reactions ranging from 2 to 10 on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 indicates low interest and 10 indicates high interest. However, in the post-survey, most respondents indicated higher interest levels, with responses ranging from 3 to 10. This suggests that participation in the outreach event may have positively influenced participants' perceptions of graphic communications as a career path. Some respondents experienced significant changes in their level of interest between the
pre-survey and post-survey. For instance, respondents who initially expressed low interest in the pre-survey (e.g., rating of 2 or 3) indicated higher interest levels in the post-survey (e.g., rating of 7 or 8).

Conversely, a few respondents who initially expressed high interest in the pre-survey showed decreased interest levels in the post-survey. The increase in interest levels observed in the post-survey responses suggests that participation in the outreach event may have positively influenced participants' perceptions of graphic communications as a career path. The event likely provided participants with valuable insights into the field, leading to greater enthusiasm and consideration for pursuing a career in graphic communications.

The comparison indicates a positive shift in interest levels following participation in the outreach event, underscoring the potential effectiveness of such initiatives in shaping students' career aspirations and perceptions of specific fields.

*Figure 5. Post-Event Interest Chart*
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS RESULTS

In comparing the results of the skills deemed necessary for success in graphic communications between Group 1 and Group 2, there were both similarities and differences. Group 1 emphasizes a broader range of skills including Written Communication, Illustrator, InDesign, Photoshop, Verbal Communication, Writing, Drawing, Teamwork, Creative, Color Management, and Hardworking. Group 1 additionally shows variability in responses, with some members mentioning specific software proficiency like Illustrator, InDesign, and Photoshop, alongside essential soft skills such as communication, teamwork, and creativity.

Group 2 also identifies essential skills, including Written Communication, InDesign, Verbal Communication, Time Management, Writing, Drawing, Teamwork, Troubleshooting, Creative, and Hardworking. Group 2 demonstrates consistency in mentioning software proficiency (e.g., Illustrator, InDesign, Photoshop) and emphasizes soft skills such as communication, teamwork, and creativity. Both groups prioritize similar skills, highlighting the importance of technical proficiency in software tools like Illustrator, InDesign, and Photoshop, alongside critical soft skills such as communication, teamwork, and creativity. However, Group 1's responses exhibit more diversity in the range of skills mentioned, whereas Group 2's responses show a more focused set of essential skills with less variability.
Comparing the skills perceived as necessary for success in graphic communications between Group 1 and Group 2, both groups prioritize similar skills. Group 1, again, emphasizes a broader range of skills. Group 1 also demonstrates a wide spectrum of skills, covering both technical proficiency (e.g., software tools like Illustrator, InDesign, Photoshop) and soft skills (e.g., communication, teamwork, creativity, and time management). The group also shows consistency in mentioning a variety of skills across respondents, reflecting a comprehensive understanding of the diverse competencies required in graphic communications. Group 2 demonstrates alignment in mentioning technical proficiency in software tools (e.g., Illustrator, InDesign, Photoshop) and key soft skills (e.g., communication, teamwork, creativity). However, Group 2 shows a narrower range of skills mentioned compared to Group 1 but still covers a comprehensive set of competencies essential for success in graphic communications.
Both groups emphasize technical proficiency in software tools alongside critical soft skills. However, Group 1's responses exhibit more diversity in the range of skills mentioned, whereas Group 2's responses show a more focused set of essential skills with less variability.

*Figure 7: Post-Event Skills Chart – Group 1 vs. Group 2*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critique</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardworking</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color Management</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troubleshooting</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimating</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Management</td>
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<td>Press Operation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lightroom</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Press</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Communication</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determined</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photoshop</td>
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<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InDesign</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrator</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Communication</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When asking the participants to list types of printing processes prior to the event, both groups exhibit a lack of detailed knowledge about printing processes, with most respondents stating that they do not know. Group 1 displays limited familiarity with printing processes, as indicated by responses such as "I don't know." Two respondents from Group 1 mentioned Screen Printing, and one mentioned 3D Printing, showing some awareness of specific printing methods. One respondent mentioned the Heat Press, suggesting a basic understanding of this particular printing process. Group 2 shows a similar trend of limited familiarity with printing processes, with most responses stating, "I don't know." One respondent from Group 2 mentioned
Sublimation, indicating some awareness of this printing method. Another respondent mentioned Heat Press and Flexography, demonstrating slightly broader knowledge than the other respondents. Group 2's responses show slightly more variety, with mentions of Sublimation and Flexography alongside Heat Press. Nonetheless, the overall understanding of printing processes appears to be limited in both groups, indicating a potential area for further education or awareness-building.

Overall, the post-event responses show a notable improvement in understanding printing processes compared to the pre-event responses in both groups. Half of the respondents in both Group 1 and Group 2 were able to name each of the four printing processes they took part in during the event. However, there was still one participant in each group that responded with “I don’t know”, which shows there are still some gaps in knowledge, suggesting that further education or awareness-building efforts may be beneficial.

Figure 8: Printing Processes Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRE-EVENT</th>
<th>POST-EVENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t know</td>
<td>I don’t know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screen Printing, 3D Printing</td>
<td>I don’t know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3D Printing</td>
<td>I don’t know</td>
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<tr>
<td>I don’t know</td>
<td>I don’t know</td>
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<tr>
<td>I don’t know</td>
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<td>I don’t know</td>
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<tr>
<td>I don’t know</td>
<td>I don’t know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heat Press</td>
<td>Sublimation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heat Press</td>
<td>I don’t know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t know</td>
<td>Lithography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t know</td>
<td>I don’t know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heat Press, Flexography</td>
<td>I don’t know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t know</td>
<td>I don’t know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When comparing group one and group two’s levels of interest in a career in the graphic communications industry prior to the event, it was found that their responses had averages close to one another. Group 1’s average interest in a career in graphic communications on a scale from 0 to 10 is approximately 4.25. Group 2’s average interest in the same field is about 4.38. Both groups show moderate interest overall, with Group 2 slightly more inclined towards pursuing a
career in graphic communications. However, it's worth noting that in Group 2, there was one respondent whose interest in a career in graphic communications was notably high, rating it as a 10.

*Figure 9: Pre-Event Interest Chart – Group 1 vs. Group 2*

Following the outreach event, both groups exhibited increased interest levels in pursuing a career in graphic communications, with Group 1 showing a slightly higher average compared to Group 2. Group 1's average interest post-event was 6.38, while Group 2's was 5.15. Group 2's responses displayed more variability, spanning a wider range of values, whereas Group 1's responses ranged from three to eight. Despite these differences, both groups maintained moderate interest levels overall, indicating a positive shift in interest following the event.
DISCUSSION

The outreach event had a diverse impact on participants' perspectives on graphic communications. While some individuals experienced a positive shift in perception, gaining a deeper understanding and increased interest in the field, others maintained their initial views or remained uncertain. However, the post-survey responses demonstrated a broader understanding of the skills necessary for success in graphic communications, emphasizing technical expertise and soft skills. Participants also exhibited a more comprehensive knowledge of graphic communications' diverse markets and applications, recognizing its relevance across various industries. Participation in the Outreach event expanded awareness of the diverse career paths within graphic communications, although some participants continued to express uncertainty or limited understanding.

Nevertheless, the event increased awareness of the courses and subjects covered in the Graphic Communications program, with participants identifying specific courses they were
previously unaware of. Perhaps most importantly, there was a noticeable increase in participants' interest in a career in graphic communications following the Outreach event. While some maintained consistent interest levels, others experienced significant changes, indicating the event's impact on shaping participants' career aspirations. These findings suggest that the Outreach event was valuable in enhancing participants' understanding of graphic communications, broadening their awareness of its applications and career opportunities, and stimulating interest in pursuing a career.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Building upon the current framework of the Outreach events, the class can further refine each rotational activity to enhance the quality of the information presented. Throughout each rotation, the student leader explained and demonstrated the process on the press, allowing students to gain hands-on experience. However, according to survey results, participants still had gaps in understanding specific career paths and markets within the graphics industry. The subjects experiencing these gaps were thoroughly examined during the panel discussion. This discussion session typically occurs during lunchtime, and observations revealed that students were less involved with the outreach team during this period. Engaging participants in the discussion and focusing on the leaders' presentations proved challenging, especially while eating with their peers. It would be beneficial to incorporate a segment during each rotation where the lead student discusses career options related to their printing process to address this uncertainty. Showcasing samples and discussing markets for each process can help clarify confusion and misconceptions. Encouraging students to spend more time in their small rotation groups and engaging in discussions on these topics can facilitate more meaningful conversations. To help enable this, the outreach leader will use resources such as an interactive presentation and
worksheets to keep the participants actively engaged and make the discussion portion more entertaining. This approach can also enhance students' attentiveness to what their rotation leader conveys instead of discussing these topics during lunch in a large group setting. These insights can inform future outreach efforts and continue to develop strategies to clear up misconceptions and promote awareness of graphic communications.

There would also be changes made within the surveys themselves for future events, which can be found in appendices C and D. For future events, directions will be written at the beginning of the survey and survey questions will be rephrased to clarify the expected response. The skills questions listed on the pre-event and post-event surveys mostly included essential skills for the graphic communications industry. For the next survey, skills that may seem relevant to a novice but are not essential to the industry will be added. Adding these skills will allow the researcher to see whether or not the participant can correctly decide which skills are needed to be successful in the industry. Instead of the participants circling the skills they think are necessary, the scales used for the career interest levels question will be changed to a Likert’s 1 to 5 scale. This gives the participants a neutral point on the scale, and then two forms are added to it because participants may be likely and unlikely; then, an adjective such as ‘very’ can be added to enhance the responses (Birkett, 2022).

Another change would be to survey not only the students but also the teachers or parents attending the event. A comparative analysis could then be done between groups to assess if the students or adults better understood graphic communications before and after the event, as well as how much each group learned during the event. This may, however, cause a shift in what the final question on the survey would look like. Currently, the question asks about the participants’ level of interest in a career in the graphic communications industry. Many adults will not change
their career paths, so the question would need to be altered to “If given the opportunity, how likely would you be to pursue a career in graphic communications?”

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Outreach event had varied effects on participants' perspectives on graphic communications. While some experienced a shift in perception, gaining a better understanding and increased interest in the field, others maintained their initial views or remained uncertain. Participants demonstrated a broader understanding of the skills necessary for success in graphic communications in the post-survey responses. There was a notable emphasis on technical expertise and recognition of the importance of soft skills and personal attributes. The post-survey responses revealed a more comprehensive understanding of graphic communications' diverse markets and applications. Participants recognized its relevance across various industries, highlighting its universal applicability. Participation in the Outreach event expanded awareness of the diverse career paths within graphic communications. While some participants were surprised by the breadth of opportunities, others continued to express uncertainty or limited awareness. The Outreach event increased awareness of the courses and subjects covered in the Graphic Communications program. Participants identified courses they were unaware of, indicating the event's effectiveness in informing them about the curriculum. Following the outreach event, there was a noticeable increase in participants' interest in a career in graphic communications. While some maintained consistent interest levels, others experienced significant changes, indicating the event's impact on shaping participants' career aspirations. Overall, the findings suggest that the Outreach event played a valuable role in enhancing participants' understanding of graphic communications, broadening their awareness of its applications and career opportunities, and stimulating interest in pursuing a career. These
insights can inform future outreach efforts and curriculum development strategies to engage students better and promote awareness of graphic communications as a viable career path.
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APPENDICES

Appendix A – Pre-Event Survey Questions
1. What is your definition of graphic communications?
2. Circle what skills you think are necessary to succeed in this field.
   Written Communication  Illustrator  InDesign  Photoshop  Determined
   Verbal Communication  Pre-press  Lightroom  Press Operation
   Time Management  Writing  Drawing  Estimating  Teamwork
   Troubleshooting  Creative  Color Management  Hardworking  Critique
3. What types of markets do you relate to graphic communications?
4. Are there any specific career paths associated with this major that you are aware of?
5. Can you name some of the courses or subjects that are covered in this major?
6. List the types of printing processes you know of.
7. How interested are you in a career in graphic communications?
   0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (circle one)

Appendix B – Post-Event Survey Questions
1. Did the outreach event change your perspective on graphic communications? If yes, how?
2. Circle what skills you identify as skills you need to be successful in this field.
   Written Communication  Illustrator  InDesign  Photoshop  Determined
   Verbal Communication  Pre-press  Lightroom  Press Operation
   Time Management  Writing  Drawing  Estimating  Teamwork
   Troubleshooting  Creative  Color Management  Hardworking  Critique
3. What types of markets do you relate to graphic communications?
4. Were there any career paths associated with GC that you found surprising or that you did not previously consider?
5. Were there any courses in the GC program that you were unaware of?
6. List the types of printing processes.
7. How interested are you in a career in graphic communications?
   0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (circle one)
Appendix C – Updated Pre-Event Survey Questions

Thank you for participating in this survey about graphic communications. Your input is valuable in understanding perceptions and skills related to this field. Please follow the instructions below:

1. How would you define graphic communications?

2. How often do you believe each skill is used in this field?

   a. Written Communications

      | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
      |       |       |           |       |        |

   b. Verbal Communication

      | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
      |       |       |           |       |        |

   c. Time Management

      | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
      |       |       |           |       |        |

   d. Troubleshooting

      | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
      |       |       |           |       |        |

   e. Adobe Illustrator

      | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
      |       |       |           |       |        |

   f. Adobe InDesign

      | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
      |       |       |           |       |        |

   g. Adobe Photoshop

      | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
      |       |       |           |       |        |

   h. Presentation Skills

      | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
      |       |       |           |       |        |

   i. Pre-Press Operations

      | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
      |       |       |           |       |        |
j. Press Operations

Never  Rarely  Sometimes  Often  Always

k. Writing

Never  Rarely  Sometimes  Often  Always

l. Drawing

Never  Rarely  Sometimes  Often  Always

m. Creativity

Never  Rarely  Sometimes  Often  Always

n. Estimating

Never  Rarely  Sometimes  Often  Always

o. Teamwork

Never  Rarely  Sometimes  Often  Always

p. Color Management

Never  Rarely  Sometimes  Often  Always

3. What industries or markets do you associate with graphic communications?
4. Are you familiar with any specific career paths related to this major?
5. Can you name some of the courses or subjects typically included in this major's curriculum?
6. Could you list any printing processes you are aware of?
7. How interested are you in pursuing a field in the graphic communications industry?

Very Likely  Likely  Neutral  Unlikely  Very Unlikely
Appendix D – Updated Post-Event Survey Questions

Thank you for participating in this survey about graphic communications. Your input is valuable in understanding perceptions and skills related to this field. Please follow the instructions below:

1. How did the outreach event impact your perception of graphic communications? If it did, please explain how.

2. How often do you believe each skill is used in this field?

   a. Written Communications
      - Never    Rarely    Sometimes    Often    Always
   b. Verbal Communication
      - Never    Rarely    Sometimes    Often    Always
   c. Time Management
      - Never    Rarely    Sometimes    Often    Always
   d. Troubleshooting
      - Never    Rarely    Sometimes    Often    Always
   e. Adobe Illustrator
      - Never    Rarely    Sometimes    Often    Always
   f. Adobe InDesign
      - Never    Rarely    Sometimes    Often    Always
   g. Adobe Photoshop
      - Never    Rarely    Sometimes    Often    Always
   h. Presentation Skills
      - Never    Rarely    Sometimes    Often    Always
3. What industries or markets do you associate with graphic communications?
4. Did any career paths related to graphic communications surprise you, or were there any not previously on your radar?
5. Were there any courses within the graphic communications curriculum that you were unaware of?
6. Can you list the different types of printing processes you are familiar with?
7. How interested are you in pursuing a field in the graphic communications industry?