

Inside SFCC



SFCC fashion illustration students Angela Vigil and Linda Isrofa prepare for the COLLECTIVE Fashion Show at El Museo de Santa Fe on Oct. 26 during Santa Fe Design Week 2006. The fashion show provided an opportunity for SFCC fashion design students to showcase their creations.

Reading, Writing ... and Design? A New Approach to the General Education Model

The ability to design was once considered a pure artistic pursuit. Today, design is moving into the mainstream as a basic skill needed in almost every job.

Design is everywhere. It characterizes our homes, our roads and our cities. It's a component of clothing, film, furniture, lighting, media, the Web and nearly every product we use.

"Everything that is designed sends a message," said Marcia Reifman, assistant professor in media arts at Santa Fe Community College (SFCC). "It can be dull, dynamic, useful."

Because design touches almost every career a student could choose, the concept

of general education is expanding at SFCC to teach students how to use color, materials, shape and composition as a means of visual communication.

"There is an overlap between art, entertainment, energy, technology and business," said Al Reed, dean of business and technologies. "Design is in the background as an important communication skill that is needed and the lines dividing certain career pathways are blurring because of this need for design and visual communication skills."

For example, today's business students need marketing and product design

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Design at SFCC

Architectural Drafting and Construction Management

Students pursue careers in architecture, engineering or construction. With a degree, they qualify as a drafting or construction management technician.

Fashion Design

Students build a strong foundation for successful careers as buyers, entrepreneurs, designers of apparel or accessories, product designers, retailers, stylists or wholesales in the fashion industry.

Interior Design

Students pursue careers as licensed designers or decorators, stylists, buyers, product designers, sales representatives, retailers or wholesalers. The program prepares students to advise on architectural requirements, space planning, and the function of a given project.

Media Arts

Students pursue careers as graphic artists, Web designers, videographers, film editors, photographers and publications designers. They work in advertising, animation and film.

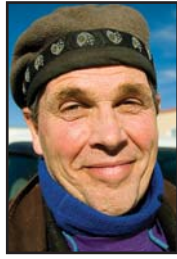
Fine Woodworking

Students leave the program ready to design and build their own furniture. They can work as business owners creating custom furniture for hotels, restaurants and homes.



Learning for Life

Todd Williams, a 58-year-old Santa Fe carpenter with an affable smile and an artsy vibe, said his secret to staying young is by remaining in school and dreaming of a second career in art.



His carpentry work pays the bills. But he caps off his days at SFCC by studying archival printing and digital imaging to satisfy his omnivorous passion for art or specifically what he calls “photo art.”

“There is so much to learn,” he said about staying in school at his age. “I really would like to go out the door in the morning as a working artist.”

“I am preparing to take my work out in the world, and it’s a result of my learning experience here,” he said. “My new tools are for channeling my personal energy and inquiry. It’s richer; it’s a world beyond.”

Reading, Writing ... (continued)

skills. Fashion design students are learning to use digital design programs.

“Being strong in one area, such as being a good patternmaker or a strong illustrator, is not enough anymore,” said Mechele Hesbrook, assistant professor in fashion and interior design. “You have to learn computer skills, you have to have a basic understanding of drawing, sketching, textiles, fabrics, color and shape.”

Andrew Kerr, assistant professor in architectural drafting and construction management, said design skills also give students a way to demonstrate true professionalism in various fields.

“It’s about students being able to discern what is it about the design of something that makes it work and why it communicates,” Reifman said. “And that, I think, is a learned thing.” By learning design, students are adding to their cache of abilities in a way that is making them more attractive in the Santa Fe job market.

Who are SFCC’s Design Students?

“We have a number of students who own their own businesses. We have students who own retail establishments downtown, online businesses or work for major interior design firms.”

– Mechele Hesbrook, assistant professor in fashion and interior design

“We have students from all over New Mexico and from other states wanting to take classes here because in the Southwest region, no other institution comes close to what we offer at SFCC.”

– Bob Mays, assistant professor in fine woodworking

“Even the beginning students, who are just starting to learn a particular software or discipline, often come up with ideas and results that are a total surprise to me and reveal something astonishing.”

– Michael Sumner, media arts student

“A lot of students come to SFCC with the technical skills but they don’t have an education in aesthetics or design. Because of computers, anybody can be a graphic designer, but what they find out is they are not really good unless they have some background in art or design.”

– Marcia Reifman, assistant professor in media arts

“If you want to learn practical architecture and job skills that you can utilize right away to get a job in architecture, go to SFCC.”

– Shantara Ford, architectural drafting student

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A portion of this growth comes from the college’s film crew training program, supported in part by New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson’s statewide film initiative.

SFCC sources believe the city’s economic plan to identify and promote Santa Fe as a world-class center for design and creative industries has created an increasing demand for education in these disciplines.

The college has also been able to tap into the expertise of leading design professionals who choose to live in Santa Fe.

“Our students are trained by top designers in fashion, architecture, filmmaking, media arts, interiors and woodworking,” Hesbrook said. “Our goal is to train them so they can stay, work and contribute to this beautiful community.”