

Viewpoints

Winter 2007
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The Official Newsletter of the Visual Communication Division of AEJMC

NOTES FROM SAN FRANCISCO



Then and now: 40 years of Visual Communication and AEJMC

By Loret Gnivecki
Steinberg
Division Head
Rochester Institute

What we thought it would be and what we never could have anticipated.

At our annual convention luncheon, **Julianne Newton, Jim Kelly** and **Claude Cookman** offered perspectives on VisCom's presence and role in AEJMC for the past forty years. Then moderator **Michelle Seelig** posed the question, "What does the VisCom Division mean to you?"

We took turns around each of four large tables, introducing ourselves and sharing stories, reflections, humor, affirmation, and acknowledgement. Several members pointed out mentors and friends who had first introduced them to VisCom and AEJMC. Some acknowledged inspiring and important figures who couldn't join us in San Francisco. Some described how they had discovered VisCom by attending a panel and being surprised by our members' friendliness and supportiveness. A new member exclaimed, "You people *laugh!* I knew right then I should join this division!" Voices echoed, "I belong here" and "This is

the division where I don't have to explain why what I see is so important."

We looked forward to and heard every single person's voice, no matter how long it took. Laughter, a few surprised at tears, much warmth -- The room emptied slowly when we were through.

Please read Claude's notes from his talk, published in this newsletter, and--as he asked us to do at the luncheon--give yourself a pat on the back and remember that you're an important part of this organization!

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Think you missed an issue? You didn't! The Fall '06 issue has morphed into the Winter '07 issue due to extended deadlines and busy schedules. As I end my tenure as newsletter editor, I just want to say, "The VisCom division is great!" - Janis Page

PLAN TO ATTEND
The 90th Annual
AEJMC Convention
Washington, D.C.
Renaissance Hotel



Logo designed by Seth Vander Tuig,
Iowa State University

NOTES FROM THE 2006 CONVENTION



By Loret Gnivecki Steinberg
Division Head

It's hard to recall when the words "media convergence"

first appeared at AEJMC, but if this year's convention topics and dialogue are indicators, convergence is now fully integrated into what we do in and out of the classroom.

In that context, the focus of VisCom presentations and conversations might seem surprisingly traditional – seeing, teaching, and producing visually communicative work. But even though the technology keeps changing (sometimes it seems to do that weekly), the core issues are still familiar:

The songs we sing have the same harmonies – only the instruments have changed. How do we teach it? How do we see it? Will the values of visual journalism and communication be affected in this new environment?

VisCom and Magazine divisions joined for a preconvention workshop on teaching in a visual environment – visual/verbal thinking, ways to get students and the public involved, and understanding fair use. The new-tech frames for these traditional themes included contemporary magazine environments, visual/verbal editorial workflow, blogs as experiential learning or interdisciplinary tools, and use of copyrighted material in new forms. But good design, effective communication and understanding the law are still essential.

The first regular convention programming day began with a panel on research and academic credibility. We know that visual research is real research, but often our academic institutions have problems seeing and understanding its value. Brian Johnson and an inspired group of teachers described ways of establishing benchmarks for visual research and building a visual portfolio.

Joe Saltzman entertained everyone with a look at the image of TV journalists in popular culture, setting the stage for an examination of broadcast journalism. Looking at the origins for the pop culture image, we can better understand the medium, the messenger and the impact of the message.

The panel "Trees and Apples that Fall from Them..." helped each of us see how his or her own work and research influence and inspire students. Michael Cheers photographs in the field with his students, Jean Trumbo's professional work gives rise to visual problems she presents in class, and Michelle Seelig's assignments showed how one teacher can encourage diverse responses from a single group of students. Paul Lester opened up our thinking about creative and intellectual influences with his "family tree" of visual thinking and history. While we all recall our most significant teachers, we now think about THEIR most significant influences and on to their generation of forefathers and mothers. Paul demonstrated how his work descends from people like J. B. Colson, Robert Gilka, Berenice Abbot, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy or even Richard Avedon.

Two panels dealt with disaster and the media. Jock Lauterer took up the challenge of "Working Hurricane Katrina & Beyond: Was there any way to really prepare?" Meg Spratt of the Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma, and Sue Morrow, formerly director of visuals at the St. Petersburg Times and now Deputy Director of photography at the Sacramento Bee, described how dangerous reporting situations affect media workers. A lively discussion questioned editors' expectations of their staff and their support of journalists suffering from post traumatic stress disorder.

The second disaster panel, "It'll never happen again..." looked at how stories of disaster are

2006 Convention *continued*

sometimes reframed in a more positive light out of concerns for future investment and growth. **Kathleen Fearn-Banks** and **David Perlmutter** offered ways to question or even deconstruct the surface message to understand the event better. Student magazines took the stage during a panel VisCom cosponsored with Magazine--two divisions which have a lot to share. **Scott Fosdick** and the panelists on "Publishing a Student Magazine" showed excellent examples from universities around the country. Student magazines are valuable part of any journalism program. Budgets, advising and time constraints can still complicate student magazine production, but new technology, new ideas and the general popularity of magazines make it worth the struggle.

"UMABJ Visual Communication Project in New Orleans and Coastal Mississippi" was a collaboration in more than one way. **Michael Cheers** traveled with a group of students from the University of Mississippi, photographing and writing stories along the Gulf Coast. He described working shoulder to shoulder with them as they came to see themselves not just as students, but as journalists with an impact. **Deborah Willis**, who has an extensive career as an art photographer, teacher, writer, historian and curator, participated in her first AEJMC

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April 1st is the deadline to answer our AEJMC Annual Call

The Visual Communication Division of AEJMC invites faculty and students to submit competitive papers devoted to theoretically based studies of visual communication and to issues concerning the professional practice of visual media production for presentation at the association's annual convention. Visual is broadly defined and includes photography, film, television, web design, graphic design, illustration, and digital imaging, as well as other visual phenomena.

The division encourages submission of papers that address a broad spectrum of methodology and application on all types of visual media--advertising, broadcast, digital imaging, film, graphic design, multimedia and web design, photojournalism, propaganda images, visual images and culture, visual literacy, and visual aspects of political campaigns, etc. Both qualitative and quantitative research in media history, law, policy, effects, processes, uses and ethics are also welcome.

All submissions will be blind refereed by a panel of independent readers. A \$100 award will be given to the top student contribution and the top three faculty papers will be recognized in the AEJMC Annual Convention Program. Papers are accepted for peer review on the understanding that they are not already under review for other conventions and that they have been submitted to only one AEJMC group for evaluation. Papers accepted for the AEJMC Convention should not have been presented to another convention or published in scholarly or trade journals prior to presentation at the convention.

Submission Guidelines: All research papers must be uploaded through an online server via a link on the AEJMC website: <http://www.aejc.org/07convention>. Make sure to upload through the link marked Visual Communication Division. All papers must be uploaded to the server no later than 11:59 p.m. (Central Standard Time) Sunday, **April 1, 2007**. All papers must be typewritten and double-spaced. Format should be word, WordPerfect, or a PDF.

Upload an abstract separately of no more than 75 words. Completely fill out the online submission form with author(s) name, affiliation, mailing address, telephone number, and email address. The title should be printed on the first page of the text and on running heads on each page of text, as well as on the title page. Do not include author's name on running heads or title page.

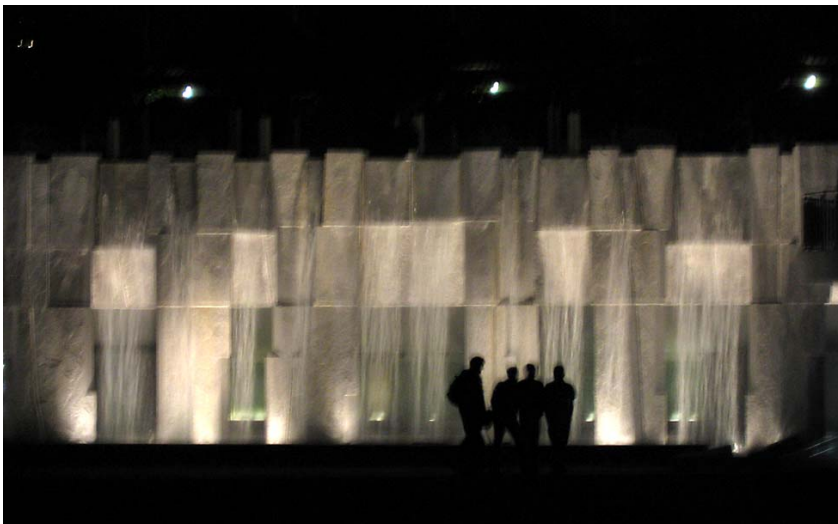
All authors will be advised whether their paper has been accepted and will receive a copy of the reviewers' comments by May 15, 2007.

At least one author of an accepted paper must attend the convention to present the paper.

**AEJMC
Goes
Digital!**



Questions?
Please contact:
Michelle Seelig,
Research Chair
School of Journalism
University of Miami
305-284-5211 or
mseelig@miami.edu



Where we've been: Nighttime visitors admire the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial and Waterfall at Yerba Buena Gardens, one block from the Marriott convention hotel in San Francisco, site of the 2006 AEJMC Annual Conference. (photo by John Freeman/University of Florida)

Student Competition: Create a LOGO for Chicago '08

The 2007 AEJMC Convention Logo Design competition is underway. The winning logo design will appear on various media materials used to promote the 2008 Convention.

Each logo design must include this copy: AEJMC August 2008 Chicago. In addition the logo must be adaptable to multiple uses and sizes; reflect a diversity of interests within AEJMC; be reproducible in solid tones using one color (Black); and use (only) original student artwork.

Ideally, each logo design will represent all of these concepts:

- 1.) Chicago
- 2.) journalism
- 3.) education

Each logo design must originate in a class taught by an AEJMC member. Look for more details to come. If you have any questions, please contact either: Nicole Smith at smithne@email.unc.edu or Dustin Supa at dsupa@umsis.miami.edu.

Viewpoints is the official newsletter of the Visual Communication Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication and is published three times a year. Articles and letters to the editor are encouraged. Opinions expressed in all submissions belong to the authors and not the Viewpoints editorial staff, the officers of the Visual Communication Division, or the officers of AEJMC. Please e-mail submissions to Loret Steinberg at loret@mail.rit.edu.

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Report from the Vice-Head and Program Chair

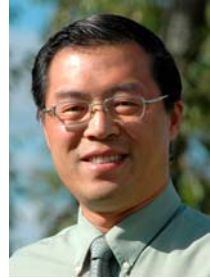
Dear VisCommies

First, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to you for the many wonderful panel ideas you sent to me. Without your recipes, spices, and even ready-made dishes, it is impossible for me to prepare the feast that you all will enjoy next summer. I got so many good ideas that I had to merge several panels. Even then, I still submitted 24 panels, too many to be accommodated since we had enough chips to handle at most ten panels. As a result, many good panel ideas did not get a chance to be squeezed into the program. I will keep those and pass them on to Renee for next year.

With so many good panels in hand, I had to work hard to sell them to other divisions and interest groups. In the ten panels that VisCom is going to co-sponsor, seven are from VisCom. VisCom will co-sponsor one panel from Mass Comm & Society and another from Magazine. Viscom will also be part of a Mini Plen initiated by the Commission on the Status of Women.

I really appreciate several division/IGs' generosity and cooperation. Chinese people have a saying, "It's impolite to not return favor when you have received favor from another person." Something like that. Well, Renee is going to pay the debt for me next year. On the other hand, during the chipping process,

By
Edgar Huang
Vice-Head &
Program Chair
Indiana University -
Purdue University
Indianapolis



she spotted three to four abundantly rich IGs/divisions (ones that too many chips to spend). I am afraid they will become her preys next year. Roar!

I am glad to see some old friends and some new allies this year that will co-sponsor panels with VisCom. Among them are:

- Commission on the Status of Women
- Communication Technology
- Community College Journalism Association
- Internship & Careers
- Law & Policy
- Magazine
- Mass Comm & Society
- Media & Disabilities
- Minorities and Communication
- Public Relations
- Radio-TV
- Science

Advertising is going to work unofficially with VisCom, too, on the pre-convention.

When I say a feast, I really mean it. There will be a pre-convention called TEACHING AND WORKING IN MULTIMEDIA WORLD initiated by VisCom and co-sponsored by five divisions. Professor Mindy MacAdams (mmcadams@jou.ufl.edu) from UF is organizing it. It contains loads and loads of the most updated, valuable, and hands-on information regarding how to teach media convergence. Mindy and other professors who will work with her on the pre-convention are planning to invite pros and possibly CEOs of those big-name media companies in D.C. and highly experienced multimedia professors and media convergence professors. You are welcome to recommend panelists or recommend yourself for the five panels to her.

The pre-convention is tentatively scheduled for 1:00 to 10:00pm, Wednesday. The five sessions agreed upon by all five divisions are as follows:

a. The status quo and the future of media convergence and the industry's expectation on future journalists. Ideally, we can invite several industrial leaders to talk to the panel.

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NOTES FROM THE 2006 CONVENTION



continued

convention to present and discuss the project “Engulfed By Katrina: Photographs Before and After the Storm.” Willis curated the exhibition, which included more than 80 photographs by 32 photographers.

The last day of the convention brought us full circle. **Larry Dailey** put two panels together that ran one after the other, giving us considerable insight into the technological frontiers of information and content delivery and returning to some of the questions from our preconvention workshops.

“Conceptualizing Interactivity” wowed everyone with stunning work by **Ryan Sparrow** on interactivity and games, **Edward Lenert** on wikis and blogs, **Mindy McAdams** with an engaging interactive news graphics presentation, **Larry Dailey** on interactivity and games and **Stephen Masiclat** posing some challenging questions and concepts in talking about the “math of interactivity.” It became clear that emerging technologies will continue to redefine news and journalism, perhaps even forcing us to develop new distinctions in content. Ways of delivering content changes audience expectations, and can blur the lines between information and entertainment, passive and active engagement, and a commitment to truth and mere “truthiness.”

The lively discussion continued as the next session set up in the same room. “Talking to the Avatar—videogaming and advertising” stretched our ideas of news and information even further as **Susan Chang** talked about advertising product placement in games, **James Ivory** addressed technology’s impact on content, **Larry Dailey** shared how he teaches game design in a journalism program, and **Larry Pryor** showed ways to use game artifacts in non-game contexts, including documentaries.

After a long and very busy week participants found themselves in a lively wrap-up. How

can we continue to serve the purpose and work of journalism and visual journalism? As soon as we learn to make use of one technology we’re confronted with yet another, new way of speaking. Several echoed Larry Pryor’s concern that we tend to speak to each other, to those who already know how technology presents us with opportunities and dangers at the same time. “We need to be talking to everyone at *every* level of media engagement,” Pryor pointed out. “Most people don’t understand that the technology is here. Now.”

“Most people don’t understand that the technology is here. . . Now.”

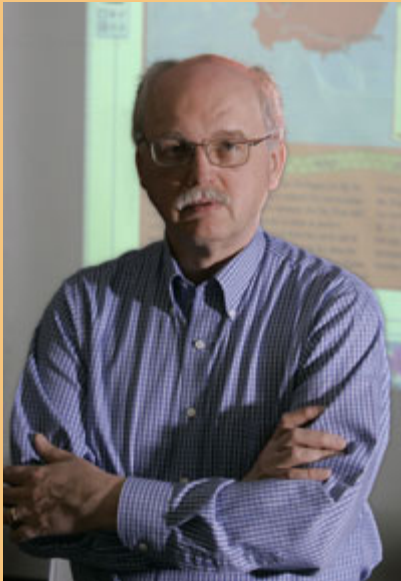
That’s why I asked the participants in those final panels to tell us how we might speak clearly both to those who are already aware of the future for media and those who have no familiarity with technological impact.

And they did. Stay tuned for **Edgar Huang’s** article on the ideas that emerged from last year’s convention, the entirely new programs put together with the help of the VisCom membership, and the terrific pre-convention workshop that will pick up where that last San Francisco discussion left off, thanks to Mindy McAdams’ guidance and hard work with a good group of our VisCom colleagues.

- Loret

PLEASE NOTE – The 2007 convention in Washington, D.C. is scheduled to begin on a Thursday August 9th and will run through Sunday, August 12th. This means that the pre-convention workshop (which promised to be extraordinary) will take place on Wednesday, August 8th!

As AEJMC has added interest groups and divisions over the years, the need for additional programming slots has grown. Important and interesting programming now takes place for four full days – the 2005 and 2006 schedules were packed with events throughout the entire convention. Please try to allow yourself as much time as possible for the 2007 sessions, since the programming will be extensive from Thursday through Sunday. And if you’re planning on the pre-convention workshop, plan on joining us Wednesday from noon until ten p.m.



Cookman salutes VisCom's 40th Anniversary

[Remarks given by Claude Cookman in San Francisco at the luncheon celebrating the 40th anniversary of AEJMC's Visual Communication Division.]

My fellow VisCommies:

The art historian Erwin Panovsky once observed that when you talk about yourself, you run the risk of betraying false modesty or genuine conceit. I'll try hard to steer between those two poles, but I hope you'll indulge me as I personalize these comments.



My doctoral program was geared to turning out museum curators — not university academics. I recall no discussion of conferences, papers, journal articles, peer review, development or the tenure process. I learned a bit about photography and art history, but in terms of what it took to survive as an academic, I was clueless.

It was the Visual Communication Division — or more precisely, its members — that taught me to how to be an academic and saved me from a life of penury.

My first encounter with VisCom was my first AEJMC convention, in Chicago. I was on a teaching panel and the moderator came around beforehand asking us some biographical information for the introductions. I told her, "I'm just a teacher."

I could tell by her laugh that she knew a lot more about academe than I did. I later learned her name was Jean Trumbo, and that she does much of the "heavy lifting" in the VisCom Division.

On the research side, I remember how exciting it was to be at a panel in New Orleans and realize that more than half of the working historians of photojournalism in the U.S. were present in that room.

Sadly, two of those people are not able to be with us today because of health issues. So a toast to two of my heroes from our division: Zoe Smith and Michael Carlebach.

I remember at the Anaheim convention, how Jim Kelly taught me what a discussant does and why that role is vitally important to the scholarly process.

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Claude Cookman

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At that same convention, I met Paul Martin Lester who taught me the importance of maintaining a serious academic demeanor at all times.

Seriously, I was really impressed yesterday at Paul's six-degrees-of-separation presentation at the morning teaching panel. It made me think not just about the past of our VisCom division, but its future.

So, I am delighted and proud to see some of my students entering the Division and playing important roles. I think especially of my friend Edgar Huang, who will make a great vice head of VisCom this year and an excellent chair in 2007 - 08. And my friend Dennis Chamberlin, who's attending his first AEJMC convention this

year. When you see Dennis's creative project this afternoon, you'll understand how much he will be contributing to our collective visual imagination over the next few decades.

Like many of you, I have very few like-minded colleagues at my school. Most of them are all social scientists who love to count things. So I always look forward to our annual conventions where I can talk with people who know and care about photojournalism, graphic design, infographics and the ethics that undergird all three. People who understand that aesthetics are more than mere decoration, but are a vital part of our shared human condition — a reflection of our deepest human needs.

Between conventions, it delights me that we continue our camaraderie through the wonderful Online conversations we have on our listserv. I value the intellectual stimulation in these threads, and I applaud the willingness to help each other out with problems.

So I am grateful to my many VisCommie friends who have taught me how to be an academic and have made my learning process a great joy.

Because I came of age in the 1960s and because this is San Francisco, it seems appropriate to conclude with a radical idea: I submit to you that there is no Visual Communications Division! Rather, there are people who care about each other, who are willing to support each other, to teach clueless old refugees like me how to become academics.

People with names like Jean and Jim, Paul and Loret, Michelle, Edgar, Michael, Zoe, Julianne, Rob, Kim, Jock, Patsy, Howard, Roxanne. People with the name on your name tag.

My appreciation and my affection to all of you.

Now here's the active-learning part. Please raise your right hand, reach over and give yourselves a big pat on the back.



By Claude Cookman, Associate Professor, Indiana University

Continued

Report from the Vice-Head and Program Chair

b. Best practices of multimedia reporting with the emphasis on how the pros did them. Best practitioners will be invited to talk to the panel. This session is project-oriented.

c. Experiences and lessons from campus multimedia reporting. Representatives from campuses will tell their stories of teaching and practicing media convergence on campus.

d. Teaching multimedia software vs. critical thinking: The balancing game. The focus is on how to have a big picture when teaching multimedia reporting. Media convergence thinkers from the academic world will have their say.

e. Resources of teaching multimedia skills. This is going to be the highlight of the pre-convention. Around six academic presenters will show to the audience their valuable experiences of quickly producing multimedia templates or products by using available resources, ideally free and open resources. Through this session, the audience members will take home the skills they probably would never learn or would take months to learn. This session is skill-oriented.

Because of the huge common interests in the topic of media convergence, I expect that many conference attendees will fly in one day earlier to attend this event. I would like to see you there that day. Talking about media convergence, allow me to smuggle a piece of news about myself. My major study, "Bridging newsrooms and classrooms: Preparing the next generation of journalists for converged media," has come out in a recent issue of *Journalism and Communication Monographs*. I hope you received it and enjoyed reading it.

Edgar Huang, Ph.D.



The Visual Syllabus for Visual Communicators



Larry Dailey
Teaching Chair
University of
Nevada-Reno

It's embarrassing.

My syllabus is nothing but words.

I've been a photographer and picture editor. I now teach visually oriented classes. And my students think visually.

Yet, each semester I still distribute that gray syllabus.

Well, thanks to Linda Nilson and her evangelism about the graphic syllabus, my document is about to change.

A graphic syllabus provides a way to present the flow and organization of your course. It compliments the linear text-based version with a flow chart that helps students see and understand how course components fit together.

By inserting meaningful graphic information into a written syllabus, instructors can literally provide students with a big picture of the semester. And graphic components can help faculty re-examine and tighten their course.

This picture emphasizes the relationships between the various parts of a course. Complimenting a text-based syllabus with graphic components approach can result in better retention and retrieval of course content. Much as a photograph can help tell the part of a story that text cannot tell, graphic elements in our syllabus can help our students understand concepts that are difficult to convey in text. It is not news to visual communications instructors that people think differently.

Some of folks are data-driven. They need text, facts and figures to understand issues.

Others are "whole picture" learners. These students need to see an overview before they can understand the

importance of individual assignments.

Still others are visual learners. These folks eschew tomes of written text. Their brains require visual clues to facilitate processing, learning and understanding.

We, as visual communication instructors, know that it's best to present information in several of different ways. When we teach our students to tell stories with graphics and photographs, we are actually teaching them to use multiple communication modalities to reach people who have different learning styles.

Research from the fields of cognitive psychology and perceptual studies support our approach. When we provide a graphic syllabus, we allow students to see the semester by using two modalities. Multiple modalities, especially when visual modalities are included, are among the most efficient at transmitting information, according to Nilson's research.

Simply put, visuals in documents can quickly communicate meaning.

So, now the question: How does one make a syllabus into a visually interesting document?

You probably already have the tools. In Microsoft Word, the AutoShapes toolbar (Insert → Picture → AutoShapes) can help you quickly construct a flowchart of your course. Other mind-mapping or graphic-organizing software can also be used. You're basically constructing a map or flowchart. With this flowchart you can use lines to connect related topics. Text on the side can show when in the semester each topic is covered. And the fonts and shapes you choose can help convey meaning. For example, a hexagon and bold type might visually communicate "stop" or "caution."

Flowchart models are great for quickly communicating the structure and relationships in the class. However, there are more exciting ways to graphically represent course information than with simple flowcharts.

The more artistic among us might choose to represent course content by using graphic metaphors. For example, an instructor might draw a desktop, with each item on the desktop representing a different course concept. Graphic metaphors can say something about a course in a very efficient – and fun – way. And they can provide a great way to engage students into the syllabus.

The downside is that you need to be something of an artist to draw one. And, it might be more difficult to convey the flow of your course when you are constrained to a metaphor.

Whether you choose a metaphor of flowchart type of graphic syllabus, the key is to present information about your syllabus in a logical, visual way. As with most visual communications, there are a few common-sense rules.

First, keep it simple. The idea is to help students understand your course, not to show off your skills at making charts.

Second, be sure to show the flow of your course. Your course is linear, so the chart explaining your course should show the progression of time. If you use arrows to show a few relationships, make sure that the arrows do not confuse students about when things happen.

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Visual Syllabus - Continued from page 10

Third, remember that you are graphically representing your syllabus, not the field that you're teaching and not the field's history. Finally, as you teach your course, remember that you've created a map. Refer to that map often. And use the map to engage students as you proceed on your pedagogical journey.

Linda Nilson recently presented these concepts during a workshop at my university. You can view her entire presentation at <http://imedia.unr.edu/ETPGraphicSyllabus/ETPGraphicSyllabus.aspx> (you'll need Windows Media Player. Mac users might need to download a plug-in to play this file. It's at <http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyId=915D874D-D747-4180-A400-5F06B1B5E559&displaylang=en>.

Again, my syllabus is woefully gray. I have not yet implemented a graphic syllabus. But I will next semester.

To provide one example, however, I've created a prototype graphic of an imaginary course in visual literacy. The adjacent example is a fake flowchart that I constructed for this article. It shows one example of what a graphic component for a syllabus might look like.

Use your creativity and have fun when you develop your own graphic syllabus.

Examples from real-life courses can be found in the journal "To Improve the Academy: Resources for Faculty, Instructional and Organizational Development," Vol. 20, 2002. Nilson's, "The Graphic Syllabus: Shedding a Visual Light on Course Organization," begins on p. 238.

- Larry Dailey

