

Professional Reflection

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Completing this program and learning about the design industry has taught me a lot about myself and how to tap into my creativity and utilize the right tools to be successful in each course and project I've done in and out of school. I put my all into most of my projects and despite the challenges I have faced in designing certain projects and putting them all together for my print and website portfolio, I've really grown as a designer and hope to continue to be better. What I did to create these portfolios was with the intention of making all of it readable to clients and employers first. Readability is one of the main important factors in creating any type of online content, such as a website portfolio in my case, and it can increase your search engine optimization (Belford, 2021). Most of my projects consist of typefaces that are either a part of a brand style guide or a chosen one to go with my designs and are easily readable.

Typeface is one of the design elements in my projects that were key to making successful designs. Another thing that worked well was color and formatting. I like using bright colors and sometimes I think neutral tones can work with colors and it's an important factor to contrast color choices properly. Not only should your type be readable and legible, but with the color choice of your type and how it looks on the background color of any platform, it will determine if they contrast or not. Self-taught graphic designer and illustrator Perhiniak (2021) mentions, "You don't want color pairings to feel uncomfortable, avoid using two colors that are too bright or too similar". You will often see a darker background with a light color type in my projects or vice versa. For example, on the menus of my TOWN brand identity, I went with the Bamboo color for the type against the Slate gray color, and the Bamboo color stands out in front of the background color.

It was not an easy journey all the way into completing my capstone and program, in fact, I struggled with some of my projects that had to do with using Adobe Animate, HTML, CSS, and JavaScript. Entering the web design field, you're expected to know how to code enough to create the basics of a website, and it was a tedious process in the beginning of the program. Now that I have these skills, it only needs to get better from here on out, and I'm willing to learn how to improve to be more comfortable and less frustrated creating websites by coding. There are also times when I wasn't completely satisfied with the design project I made and that I couldn't meet deadlines and that has taught me some things about myself that I need to work on or understand that it's okay to be this way as a designer because it may be something we all have been through.

Most feedback that I have gotten throughout the original courses of my project and in my portfolio course has been implemented into my finished pieces. Some of the valuable feedback includes the ones I've got critiquing my personal branding, the upper crust bakery logo, and my websites. I appreciate the professor's input on my work because it helps me to know from the eyes of someone who is working in the graphic design field to show me other ways that I can improve my designs. Collaboration is a big part in working together to help one another to improve their work, and this may also help in the real world when I have to work in a team with others. I made sure that the feedback I gave to my peers was thorough and covered what may improve their work.

I am thinking about pursuing my master's degree in digital marketing and what I have learned about knowing who your target audience is and making sure to keep the user at the center of your design for creating website is one of the factors I can apply in going into this program. Some digital marketers have a background in graphic design, and I believe this program can benefit me into taking the next step at marketing and marketing research. I also plan to improve

my skills in design in courses outside of school. With the knowledge I already have from this program, I can easily get through the courses I'm taking now while also learning new things. In my professional life, there are so many ways I can use the knowledge and skills that I have now to advance my career. With my web design skills, I can help small companies have more updated and modern websites to help increase traffic to their business and increase their SEO.

I would like to make some sort of impact on the design world, but it is my responsibility that I follow ethical guidelines with any design work I do. I think I would need to do some sort of research on who I am designing for or what I am designing and how that may look to people of other ethnicities or ages. I carefully consider the colors I'm using, typeface, and imagery that correctly conveys the type of message the company wants their audience to understand without it being inappropriate and offensive. Other cultures can be affected by certain designs that do not respect their culture, and I will not be that person. If I do slip up, then I take full responsibility and will take the necessary actions to improve a design to follow ethical principles.

The goals I know I can achieve through my professional life are to first get an internship this summer or the fall time. I know that it's scary to think there are other designers out there that I'm basically competing with, but I must step out and take that opportunity to get an internship before it's too late. An internship can help improve my skills, gain insight from other designers, and collaborate with those designers. After that, I hope that the internship can turn into a full-time job in the future, but if not, then I hope to find somewhere welcoming that I can grow as a designer and use my skills. I would like to work at either an agency or a small start-up company. I think small business or start-up companies may be more welcoming to someone like me who doesn't have many years of experience in the design industry. After that, I may look into applying for positions within digital marketing since I will be getting my masters in that, but I

would say my ultimate goal is taking all this knowledge and skills I have in graphic design, web design, and digital marketing and start freelancing. I love the idea of being my own boss and having a better work/life balance with the flexibility of working whenever and wherever I want for the most part.

References

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