

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

COMMUNICATIONS INSIDE/OUTSIDE

The Communications Program was designed as an intermediate level program in order to introduce students to a wide diversity of communication theories and to enable students to complete projects using various media. We attempted to establish a broadly based and culturally diverse interdisciplinary approach to the study of communications and media, as well as provide production and skill oriented experiences.

The emphasis of this study of the communication process involved learning to get in tune with a story, composing and focusing its imagery and parts so skillfully that it can be shared and meaningful. Each quarter highlighted one aspect of this three part process.

The theme of the first quarter was "One" -- the self, a thing in isolation -- and faculty lectures, films, readings and seminars were organized to highlight and reflect upon this theme. Students read and seminared on the following books and films: Robert Ornstein, Ed., The Nature of Human Consciousness; any novel by Agatha Christie; Wang Wei, Hiding the Universe; Mark Knapp, Nonverbal Communication in Human Interaction; Ernest Tudeman, Dummy; Sadegh Hedayat, The Blind Owl; "Portrait of Jason"; "Closely Watched Trains"; "Flowing with the Tao"; "Buddhism, Man and Nature"; "Murder at the Gallop"; "Murder Most Foul"; "8 1/2"; and "Last Year at Mareinbad." Our approach was to channel ideas and reactions to this material toward an appropriate workshop through both a project/problem oriented seminar and a book seminar.

Each student also chose a workshop in order to express understanding of "One." A project expressing a fully conceptualized and executed understanding of "One" was due at the end of fall quarter. Students were able to choose from workshops in super-8mm film making, audio broadcasting, poetry writing, black and white 35mm photography, film history and criticism, non-verbal communication, painting, drawing, journalism and graphics.

The theme of the second quarter was "Two" -- things in relation, the self and the other, the self and the media, the self and destiny, the self and the environment --- and faculty lectures, films, readings and seminars were organized to highlight and reflect upon this theme. Students read and discussed the following books: Edmund Carpenter, "Oh What A Blow That Phantom Gave Me!"; Martin Buber, I and Thou; Homer Smith, Kamongo or, The Padre and the Lungfish; and Peter Tompkins and Christopher Bird, The Secret Lives of Plants. These core readings were supplemented with interdisciplinary readings from numerous articles on communications, from Kathleen Raine's "A Traditional Language of Symbolism" to work by David Berlo.

Films shown were: "Sundays and Cebele"; "Out on the Periphery"; "Eskimo Artist Kenojuak"; "The Stronger"; "Teaching Sign Language to the Chimp Washoe"; "Metropolis"; and "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari." As in fall quarter a seminar to discuss each film followed its showing.

Program Description
Communications Inside/Outside
Page Two

The non-verbal communication workshop was discontinued winter quarter and a work critique seminar focusing on questions concerning art and aesthetics was substituted in order to deepen skills in focusing and sharpening imagery. The film-making workshop advanced to 16mm and set designing. All the other workshops continued. A project expressing a fully conceptualized and executed understanding of "Two" was due at the end of winter quarter.

Spring quarter the theme was "Three" -- systems, mass communications -- and the emphasis shifted to testing whether work was sharable and meaningful. Students were required to contribute to a 16mm animated film entitled "1,2,3" and to the program exhibition for the college community at the end of the quarter. Moreover, students were required to write a paper on the communication process. They were asked to organize their own seminars, select their own reading list and invite faculty to join them when appropriate. Students were able to work on the publication of the program magazine, if they chose, from the point of view of graphics, writing, photography, weaving, painting and drawing. The faculty held an open seminar on Gregory Bateson's book, Steps Towards An Ecology of Mind, and films such as "Jules Et Jim" and "Lapis" were shown.

Variations to this program were possible, such as internships, for example, when arranged between the student and faculty seminar leader.

The faculty disciplines represented in the program were art, psychology, anthropology, literature, communications and media, and chemistry. The faculty were supported by professionals in audio broadcasting, graphics, painting and photography. The visiting artist to the college joined the faculty in spring quarter.