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Creative Visual Professionals

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CREATIVE VISUAL PROFESSIONALS STUDENT ORGANIZATION

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Honors Project

Submitted to the University Honors Program
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UNIVERSITY HONORS

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Abstract

This is a documentation of an attempt to start a new university recognized student organization, Creative Visual Professionals. This group is aimed at students within Bowling Green State University's School of Art and College of Technology, Architecture, and Applied engineering, but also open to any other student who is interested in topics and skills found in such disciplines. This experience was personally an educational and challenging one. This organization will not be active for this coming Fall semester, but the groundwork has been laid for the organization to become active in the future.

Introduction

During the planning phase of my project, I was unsure of what I wanted to actually accomplish. All I knew for sure was that I wanted to combine something from my major, Visual Communication Technology, and my minor, art. Through much brainstorming, I finally landed on an idea to try to bring these different colleges together via a student organization.

I have attempted to create a brand new university recognized student organization this semester that would provide current and future students an opportunity to grow professionally and create a collaborative environment. I created a constitution, went through the OrgSync registration process, and tried to recruit students to become members.

Benefits of Creative Visual Professionals

By combining vastly creative ideas with technical knowledge, the students from these different areas of study would be able to work together to practice professional skills that would be applicable in the post-graduation world. This organization would form a proverbial bridge between colleges and bring students together who may not otherwise be associated with one another and foster a collaborative environment for ideas and projects to thrive.

Creative Visual Professionals would provide students with an additional opportunity to connect with their peers and to develop as individuals. According to Foubert and Grainger's *Effects of Involvement in Clubs and Organizations on the Psychosocial Development of First-Year and Senior College Students*, "students who were involved in student organizations by attending a meeting, joining, or leading an organization were more highly developed than those who were not involved at all in student organizations. In most areas, joining or leading an organization was associated with higher levels of development than just attending a meeting." (Foubert & Grainger, 174). This organization provides students with another chance to become

involved with something they are passionate about, meet new people they may not otherwise meet, and create an alternative environment or even a better fit for their schedule to be able to develop their professional skills. I believe that bringing creative students together from diverse programs could lead to exciting discovery and personal growth that would be unique to the organization.

Description of the Organization

The base idea behind Creative Visual Professionals is to combine the creative strengths of art and graphic design students with VCT students' technical knowledge, although it would be open to any interested student. In theory this club will work as a place for students of different backgrounds to come together to get help with ideation, assistance/critique on projects, produce work for portfolios, and practice practical business skills through teamwork and work through mock client relationships.

This organization would provide outside spaces and time for students to develop ideas, hold critiques for their work, find any physical/technical help, and connect students to services they may need. When I say connect students to services, I mean that students from different areas of study may be able to provide services to each other. For example if you're a student studying sculpture and need photographs of your work for your portfolio, then you would be able to work with a photography or a VCT student in the photography track to assist you in getting these photos. This can go even further by having a VCT student in the print track walk you through the print workflow to end up with high quality documentation of your work.

Connecting students to services and expanding knowledge could also be accomplished through specialized workshops, where an advanced student or even a faculty member could lead the group in a discussion or hands-on experience. It would be important to expand the

collaborative network of the organization, by trying to host events with student organizations, the Collab Lab and other on campus resources so that way more students can be brought together in a collaborative and educational way, and provide new learning experiences for students.

Finding Students

According to BGSU's Student Organizations Policies for information regarding the creation and operation of the organization, to form an organization you need to have a membership roster of at least ten active BGSU students. I knew throughout this process getting members was very important to the creation of the organization. Finding students was the hardest part of this process. Looking back on the semester, I realize that I didn't manage this process as well as I should have. I made flyers (see Appendix A) and posted them in various places within the Fine Arts Center, the Technology Building, and the Bowen-Thompson Student Union. I talked to some students in person before and after my classes to generate some awareness. I have one student who is willing to officially "join" my club and I've had a few others who are semi-interested and asked for more information, but no solid commitments were made.

I tried to get a table in the student union because this is a way to try to directly connect with students to make them aware about the possible new student organization and to accomplish some recruitment. Unfortunately, the union was unable to let me to reserve a table because the organization isn't yet recognized by the university. They did let me go ahead and take the paperwork to complete and return for future use after the organization is officially established.

If I were to go through this process all over again, this would be the area that I would do completely different. I knew that this was going to be the hardest part of creating an organization, but I did underestimate how difficult it would be. I would try holding actual

recruitment events or information sessions, try to get into the campus update, and have a table at the union on multiple occasions.

Constitution

The constitution was a bit of challenge to create, since I haven't had to write something like this before. I referenced both templates, especially a downloadable template from Appalachian State University, and BGSU's Student Organizations policies for the structure and for content so the constitution would be acceptable for policies/legally. Some aspects of the content are pulled directly from BGSU's policies.

This constitution (see Appendix B) may need additional revision before it's completely ready for the university, but it should be close enough to being actually a usable constitution. The constitution does outline the intended structure and operational procedure for the organization. I tried to utilize the university's values and policies in the creation of the constitution to make it easier and clearer for Creative Visual Professionals to comply with all of BGSU's expectations and policies.

Results

The results are not what I was expecting. I accept the fact that my management in the recruitment area of this project is what led to its failure to launch from an idea to being an actually usable organization for this coming Fall semester. If I would have focused more time and resources into recruitment, I would have probably met the minimum requirement of members to officially register the organization to go active in the Fall.

Even though it isn't how I expected the project to turn out, there were positives that came from this experience. Some of the success that I have had with this project is that I have a constitution that is ready to go when the organization would become active; maybe some

revisions need to be made by the time the organization is ready to be registered. I have a better understanding of how starting an organization works, like the official policies; so I would be able to fulfill this idea in a more efficient and successful way. I have gone through the OrgSync online registration process, so now I know how to do it once I reach the membership quota. The work that I've accomplished towards the organization's creation will make it easier for me or possibly another student to continue this process and carry it over the hill into reality. From the students I've talked to about this possible organization, I have received some positive feedback and support for this style of student organization to become a reality.

References

Appalachian State University. "Student Organization Constitution Template." *Student*

Organization Constitution Template,

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"Student Organizations Policies." Bowling Green State University, 2016.

Appendix A

This is a sample of the flyer that I created and posted in various buildings on campus as a main part of my recruitment efforts.

Join Today!

Creative

Visual

Professionals

Join a **COLLABORATIVE**
student environment to
develop your
**CREATIVE, TECHNICAL,
& PROFESSIONAL SKILLS**

For more information, contact:
Rachel Stromquist
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Appendix B**Creative Visual Professionals Constitution**
Bowling Green State University**Article I: Name**

Section 1: The name of this organization shall be Creative Visual Professionals (CVP).

Article II: Purpose

Section 1: The purpose of the Creative Visual Professionals organization is to:

- A. Create collaborative environment for students
- B. Provide opportunities for students to practice and develop professional skills (creative thinking, technical knowledge, etc)
- C.

Section 2: The organization is to run on a collaborative methodology, internally through its members and externally with other organizations.

Article III: Membership

Section 1: Membership is open to all enrolled Bowling Green State University students.

Section 2: Membership Responsibilities:

- A. Attend at least half of the regularly scheduled meetings
- B. Attend at least half of the organization's of the events

Article IV: Membership Fees

Section 1: An annual membership fee* be may applied

*The fee is under the discretion of the President

Section 2: If fees are applied, they would be due to the Treasurer by the end of the second month to the academic year (Fall semester), unless special arrangements are made for a member

Article V: Officers

Section 1: The Executive Board shall be the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Section 2: The term of office for the Exec Board shall be 1 academic year. (Fall through Spring semester)

Section 3: Executive Board members must be full-time BGSU students, in good conduct standing, and maintain a minimum cumulative 2.25 GPA. (BGSU Student Organizations).

Section 4: The president and treasurer may not be the same person.
(BGSU Student Organizations).

Section 5: Must attend all regularly scheduled meetings, unless prior notice of absence is given to the rest of the board

Section 6: Must attend three-quarters of the organization's events

Article VI: Duty of Officers

Section 1: Only students in good academic and disciplinary standing may serve as officers.

Section 2: The duties of the President shall be:

- A. Coordinate organization activities
- B. Acts as liaison to university and community.
- C. Serves as official representative of organization.
- D. Calls and presides over regular and special meetings .
- E. Prepare meeting agendas.

Section 3: The duties of the Vice President shall be:

- A. Assumes duties of president, when necessary.
- B. Assists President in his/her duties.

Section 4: The duties of the Secretary shall be:

- A. Keep accurate record of current organization information (roster, committees, meeting minutes, attendance, etc).
- B. Assist President and Vice-President.
- C. Counts ballots after votes.

Section 5: The duties of the Treasurer shall be:

- A. Serves as liaison to BGSU for all purpose of organizational funding .
- B. Maintains accurate and current account of all organizational funds.
- C. Responsible for dispensing funds.
- D. Understand and comply with university policies related to initiating contracts.

Article VII: Officer Election and Removal

Section 1: All executive officers shall be elected and will serve a term of 1 academic year (Fall through Spring Semester)

Section 2: Officer elections will consist of the following process*:

- A. Nomination process
- B. Elections
- C. Run-off elections, if necessary

*Details outlined in Article VIII: Elections & Voting

Section 3: In the event an officer is judged to be deficient in his/her duties (as determined by a unanimous agreement of the remaining executive officers and advisor), he/she may be removed by a two-thirds vote of the active organization membership. The advisor shall oversee the process of removal from office. (Student Organization Constitution Template.)

Article VIII: Elections & Voting

Section 1: Executive Position Nominations

- A. Students can volunteer for an executive position after their first year of membership
- B. Students can serve consecutively in the same or different executive position (as long as they win the vote)

Section 2: Voting Procedures

- A. Voting will be conducted by written ballot
- B. Votes will be counted by current Secretary
- C. Members are allowed to vote for themselves/proposals

Section 3: Elections

- A. Elections will be held during the second to last regularly scheduled meeting of the academic year or can be done during a specially scheduled meeting during the last month of the last semester of the academic year (Spring Semester)
- B. A vote is won with two-thirds majority (except for officer removal and amendment ratification)

Section 4: Run-Off Elections

- A. The top two people/proposals from the initial round of voting will be voted on again

Article IX: Committees

Section 1: Committees can form and dissolve as necessary.

Section 2: Forming a Committee

- A. The executive board must be in agreement of the need for and purpose of the committee.
- B. A committee head will either be elected or appointed depending on the size and level of responsibility of the committee.
- C. An official roster of committee members must be created.

Section 3: Committee Operations

- A. Committee must have regular open communication via in-person meetings and/or digital communication (email, messaging, etc).
- B. Committee must generate a clear set of goals and/or deadlines.
- C. Committee head must report progress/developments/concerns to the executive board during a regularly scheduled meeting and/or digital communication.

Section 4: Dissolving a Committee

- A. A timeline/expiration date can be applied during formation, if committee is for something time sensitive/temporary (like a special committee for a specific event).
- B. A vote can also be held to officially dissolve a committee

Article X: Role of Advisor

Section 1: Advisor is there to help guide the organization to its goals by sharing insight, perspective, and advice

Section 2: Responsibilities Include:

- A. Regularly attend general and executive board meeting
- B. Provide guidance to the officers
- C. Oversee all financial transactions of the organization

- D. Ensure that officers meet the minimum requirements for holding office as established by the university and the organization's constitution and by-laws
- E. Provide consultation concerning membership selection procedures
- F. Review the organizations registration

(BGSU Student Organizations).

Article XI: Meeting Procedure

Section 1: All meetings will be held once a month, specific day will be determined by members the first week of each semester.

Section 2: To be eligible to vote, all members must:

- A. Attend at least three-quarters of the meetings for the academic year
- B. Attend at least half of the organization's sponsored events/special activities

Section 3: No meetings or activities are permitted from five p.m. the Friday before each week of final exams through the end of the final exam period. (BGSU Student Organizations).

Article XII: Finances (BGSU Student Organizations).

Section 1: Accessing funds in a university account are required to have their president and/or treasurer attend annually a treasurer's training.

Section 2: All funds allocated to the organization from university controlled sources must be maintained in a university account and spent in accordance with university policies and procedures.

Section 3: Must maintain records of how their funds are generated and disbursed.

Section 4: The treasurer should keep detailed financial records and make them available to members, the advisor(s), Office of Campus Activities, as well as local, state, and federal officials upon request.

Section 5: All records associated with university fund allocations and expenses are available for public inspection as required by state law.

Section 6: Must pay all debts incurred in the name of the organization within sixty days.

Article XIII: Supremacy Clause

Creative Visual Professionals agrees to follow all Bowling Green State University, State, and Federal laws and policies. (Student Organization Constitution Template.)

Article XIV: Non-Discrimination Clause

Creative Visual Professionals will be open to students of BGSU without regard to race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, color, national origin, ancestry, genetic information, pregnancy, religion, age, marital status, disability, or status as a veteran. (BGSU Student Organizations).

Article XV: Amendments & Ratifications

Section 1: This constitution will be reviewed annually.

Section 2: Amendment Ratification:

- A. Amendment reviewed and approved by executive board.
- B. Amendment voted on by all members, must have an unanimous victory.
- C. Amendment will then need to be approved by the advisor.
- D. Revised constitution will be resubmitted to the Office of campus activities.