



Fullerton College

Self-study for Graphic Design Program

2025

Section 1: Introduction

1. Briefly describe your program, make sure to include how your program helps the College achieve its mission.

The Graphic Design program is a CTE program within the Art Department. It consists of two CTE certificates, an Advertising and Graphic Design certificate and a new Graphic Design certificate which was approved in Fall 2025. Our Graphic Design courses, in conjunction with Digital Art and Studio Art courses, offer our current, returning and future students a clear pathway to seek educational and career growth, certificates, associate degrees, and transfer opportunities. Our students come from diverse communities and we strive to create a real-world working environment using the latest technology. Our faculty are well-trained with extensive professional experience. The curriculum is designed to prepare students for careers in the creative economy in Southern California.

We have created pathways for our students to successfully organize their course choices to lead to certificate completion in the most expedient way possible. These pathways currently comprise semester-by-semester course of study plans, created by the program faculty, in conjunction with our Counseling area.

Our Graphic Design advisory committee, which meets annually, advises our faculty on what trends to follow in design related industries, what careers are currently in demand in the Southern California creative economy, and what type of new courses and certificates we should be creating to best prepare our students for entering the workforce.

Section 2: Students

2.1 Student Demographics and Enrollment Trends

1. Using the data provided by the OIE, describe the student population your department serves. Which demographic groups have the most enrollments in your program? Which student groups are underrepresented in your program? Has the demographic profile of your program changed over the last four years?

The GRFX Graphic Design prefix was split off from the ART beginning with the 2022-23 academic year limiting the amount of data used that could be utilized for this review.

Overall enrollment in the Graphic Design program has dropped 20% in the past three years, from 233 to 186.

In the past, the Graphic Design program skewed slightly more female, but in recent years has equalized with female enrollment at 47% and male enrollment at 48% with 5% unknown.

Latinx enrollment remains our largest demographic group, growing 3% over the past three years and currently at 58%. Our white enrollment has also grown 3% and now stands at 15%. Over the past three years our Asian population has dropped from 17% to 10%. The 2 or more category has held steady at 13%, as has our Black enrollment at 1%.

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2. Briefly describe course-level enrollment trends in your program over the past five years. Have the enrollment trends in your program changed over the last five years? To what do you attribute any changes or lack of changes?

Enrollment in the Graphic Design program has never recovered to the numbers we posted before the Covid pandemic. Prior to Covid, almost all graphic design courses were filled with wait lists. Since returning to campus in Fall of 2022, we have struggled to completely fill our courses and have had to drop courses for low enrollment.

At the course level, our entry level course (GRFX 100) has shown a similar 20% drop, but our more advanced courses show no decline or even substantial increases. It could be that fewer students enter the program, but the ones that do stick with it.

The drop in enrollment is worrying and can't be explained by any one cause. One concern is the belief that careers in graphic design will be greatly impacted by the widespread adoption of AI. Access to technology has also been a factor as students have little or no access to computer lab time. Without access to computers, students must rely on personal laptops and software subscriptions, which has become a financial burden for many students.

3. How do you monitor and modify course offerings, including time and modality, to ensure that students' needs are being met?

We don't have the enrollment numbers to be able to offer our courses both online and in-person. Our in-person classes now typically fill to 60%-75%. Our online offerings vary widely, with some courses filling and other courses being cancelled for low enrollment. We haven't been able to run an evening course in three years due to low enrollment. Students have shown a preference for daytime classes and there doesn't appear to be much of a pool of working professionals or older adults interested in evening courses.

We are still trying to determine a proper mix of modalities to offer our students the best opportunity to complete their pathway in the least amount of time.

2.2 Student Achievement

1. Using data provided by the OIE, describe overall student achievement counts, rates, and trends in your program over the past five years, these include: course success rates, degrees/certificates completion counts, transfer counts, licensing, job placement, wage improvements (not all of these measures apply to every program).

Retention/Completion Rate Set Standard is 74%. Retention/Completion Rate Aspirational Goal is 86.7%. Success Rate Set Standard is 62%, and Success Rate Aspirational Goal is 78.3%. The GRFX program had an enrollment of 326 with a success rate of 75.2% and an average completion rate of 87.4%.

The highest enrolled course is our entry level course, GRFX 100 Graphic Design I with an enrollment of 148 with an average success rate of 62.8% and an average completion rate of 81.8%.

All ethnic categories exceed institute success standards with Asian and White students surpassing the institute aspirational goal. The one exception is Black/African American, with a success rate of only 58%. All ethnic categories exceed the institutional Retention/Completion rate.

Many of our students transfer into the Cal State system, but because there isn't a dedicated graphic design track with the Cal State schools, transfer students would be counted in either the AA or AAT category.

Completion rates for the Graphic Design certificates are low. Students may enter the workforce before completing the certificate and there is no way to track their employment. Students may not be able to enroll in required classes in a timely matter to complete the certificate. ART 299 Independent Study has limited availability and ART 123 Business Practices has been inconsistently offered.

However, overall completion for the Advertising and Graphic Design major has improved from 3+ years for certificate completion to 3 years.

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2. Are there student groups whose success rates are below the institution-set standard or whose success rates are below other student groups? What factors can explain this?

Completion rates for the Advertising and Graphic Design major are in the mid-40% range for our Asian and mixed students, 16-20% for our Latinx and White students. There appear to be no completions for our Black students. Although there is no one cause for the low completion rate, two issues that continue to come up are technology and cost. Most of the graphic design courses require more work than can be completed in the allotted class time. We once had a dedicated Mac lab, room 1024a, which students had access to from 8am-9pm. That room was converted to other uses, so there is no longer a lab for students to use outside of class. The students who do complete the program tend to be those with access to a laptop or home computer and who can afford the subscription to the Adobe software. Those students without those resources often drop out of the program.

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3. In terms of your degree and certificate completers, are there any groups who are underrepresented in your completion data compared to the overall enrollment in your program?

Enrollment from our Black students has always been low, but the fact that there appear to be no completers is a problem that needs to be addressed. Better usage of the college's Umoja Community Program and implementation of the Starfish software may be a first step to address this issue. The overall low completion rate for all other cohorts is also problematic. It may be that our certificates are simply too big. Both certificates were designed to give our students the wide range of skills needed to compete in the current workforce, but 40 units may just seem too daunting to our students. Creating a series of smaller, more specialized certificates would most likely lead to higher completion rates. Doing so might also risk sending our students into the current workforce unprepared for current industry standards.

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4. Are your students completing your degree and certificate program requirements in the expected time frame? Are there certain groups whose rates are below other student groups? Discuss any efforts to improve time to completion.

Students who complete the Advertising and Graphic Design Certificate take on average 2.5 - 3 years. Many students choose to enter the workforce without finishing the complete certificate, either due to course availability or time commitments. The number of completers is too small to make any substantive evaluation of disaggregated groups. Being able to offer all the required courses in a timely matter is dependent on enrollment, and lower enrolled courses often get cancelled. Reworking the schedule of graphic design courses to optimize enrollment is already taking place.

2.3 Student Learning Outcomes

1. Describe your program's processes and practices for defining, assessing, and analyzing student learning outcomes at the course (CSLO) and program (PSLO) level. Include a discussion of how your program uses the results of CSLO/PSLO data to inform course and program improvement efforts.

Students in every GRFX course are assessed on multiple CSLOs related to the mastery of the skills and knowledge of each specific class. CSLO's are periodically updated to reflect changes in industry standards. Success rates for all the GRFX courses typically range from 80-85%.

2. (OPTIONAL/NOT REQUIRED) Using the data provided by OIE, describe the most salient results of CSLO or PSLO mastery rates. Did you find significant differences by race, ethnicity, gender, and other categories?
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Section 3: Other Areas of Program Effectiveness

1. Document any substantial changes to your program curriculum since the last review and discuss what prompted these changes. Looking forward, what changes to the curriculum do you plan based on the emerging needs of your discipline, industry, student population, etc.

An additional graphic design certificate was created to include recent course additions which address new and emerging industry expectations. Although the new certificate only became active in the Fall 2025 term and it is too soon to see results, large omnibus certificates may not be attractive to students. Creating a series of smaller 18-24 unit, more specialized certificates may be one way to address low completion rates for our larger certificates.

2. Please briefly describe opportunities your students have to apply and deepen knowledge and skills through projects, apprenticeship, internships, co-ops, clinical placements, group projects outside of class, service learning, study abroad, and other experiential learning activities that you intentionally embed in coursework or elsewhere in your program.

Increasingly our graphic design students have real world work opportunities on campus. Graphic design students design the biannual magazine "Inside Fullerton" in conjunction with the Journalism Department. Students have recently began working with the Theatre Department to design advertising for upcoming productions. Graphic Design students also have opportunities through the CTE office and Campus Communications.

3. Describe any laws, regulations, trends, policies, procedures, or other influences that have an

impact on your program. These can include things like Vision 2030, CALGETC, Common Course Numbering, etc.

Industry trends continue to influence our curriculum. We have added courses addressing the rise in UI/UX design, as well as other digital media formats such as motion graphics and responsive web design.

Section 4: Faculty and Staff

4.1 Population and Demographics

1. Using the data provided by OIE, describe your program's staff (full-time/part-time faculty, nonfaculty, classified). How reflective of your program's student population is your staff?

Staffing in the Graphic Design Program is 2 full-time tenured instructors and 2 to 3 adjunct instructors. In the current semester, two of the instructors are male, two are female. Instructors identify as white and Latinx. Three instructors teach face-to-face on campus, and one instructor teaches synchronously online.

2. Describe your program's staffing changes since fall 2021. How have these changes impacted your program's ability to achieve its strategic action plans?

The staffing for the program fluctuates depending on enrollment. Two courses, one online and one in-person, were cancelled due to low enrollment for the current semester. We have attempted to run evening classes staffed by working professionals, but they too have been cancelled for the past three years due to low enrollment.

4.2 Staff Support and Professional Development

1. Describe the regular discussions your program faculty are having about equitable grading, attendance, late work, extra credit policies, and other strategies to support equitable student success.

Since returning from Covid, students seem to be encountering increasing external obstacles to course retention and completion. Housing insecurity, transportation issues, caregiver responsibilities and access to technology have repeatedly come up as impediments to ongoing learning. Instructors work with students on a case-by-case basis to try and address students' individual needs and circumstances and plan a path forward for student success.

2. How have these conversations shaped practices or policies in your program? What action has arisen from these discussions? If no action has been taken, why not?

Practices adapt on a case-by-case basis based on the particular needs and challenges for each student.

3. What additional areas of professional development could help your faculty and staff engage in this work?

The graphic design program has been slow to adopt the Starfish software system, which could possibly help with retention and completion.

Section 5: Program Planning

5.1 Progress on Previous Strategic Action Plans

1. Please discuss the goals (Strategic Action Plans, SAPs) from your last self-study. Assess and explain your progress on each of the SAP.

The graphic design program was still under the ART prefix for the 2021 Program Review. Almost all the SAP's in that study focused on improvements in our Studio Art Program. There were no SAPs specific to graphic design.

2. If additional funds were NOT allocated to you in the last review cycle, how did the LACK of funds have an impact on your program?

Lack of funds from the last cycle didn't materially impact the Graphic Design Program other than pushing back needed operational objectives.

SAPs

Creation of specialized certificates.

Short Description:

The GRFX Program currently has two certificates both of which are 39-41 units. The completion rate for the Advertising & Graphic Design certificate is low, partially due to the time commitment and the inability to complete the certificate in two years. The new Graphic Design certificate was only approved in Fall 2025 and has no completers yet. Creating several smaller, more specialized certificates of 18-24 units which can be completed in only one year should improve retention and completion rates.

Measurable Outcomes:

Retention and completion rates should improve for the Graphic Design Program.

College Goals:

3.2 Reduce equity gaps in degree/certificate completion

SAP Phase:

New

GRFX Program Promotional Materials

Short Description:

Trifold brochures promoting the program certificates and student artwork.

Measurable Outcomes:

By raising awareness of the program we hope to improve enrollment.

College Goals:

3.2 Reduce equity gaps in degree/certificate completion

SAP Phase:

New

Resource Requests

Fine Arts Information/Marketing Representative (Cat 36 Fine Arts Information/Marketing Representative, 12-Month)

Enhancement:

Reinstatement of the previous Fine Arts Information/Marketing Representative is essential to support the marketing and promotion of the numerous Fine Arts events, festivals, and competitions. The Theatre Arts Department relies solely on ticket revenue to produce our shows, and we recognize how vital this position is in maintaining the high standards of our productions. Effective community outreach often begins with the arts, and restoring this role will strengthen our connection to the community while ensuring our programs including our fellow Fine Arts programs continue to thrive and be a beacon of Fullerton Colleges commitment to quality arts education.

Personnel-Related:

This position was vacated in 2017, and to ensure program growth, funding stability, and meaningful community outreach, it should be fully restored. In the absence of a dedicated Fine Arts Information/Marketing Representative, these responsibilities have been pushed onto other

staff members and faculty—or, in many cases, abandoned entirely due to the substantial time required to perform this vital work effectively. Art brings people together, reflects diverse cultures, and deepens our understanding of one another. Without a full-time professional to promote the important work happening across our Art, Music, and Theatre departments, we limit our ability to reach the community, build audiences, and showcase the excellence of our programs. Restoring this position is essential if we want to continue growing, serving our students, and fulfilling the mission of the Fine Arts Division.

Resource Category:

Non-Faculty Personnel

Quantity:

1

Unit Cost:

\$95,284.00

TotalCost:

\$95,284.00

Replacement of cabinets and flat files for room 1025 and the addition of library space.

Enhancement:

The addition of library space will allow for the expansion of a dedicated design library, providing students with additional resources to enhance their education.

Personnel-Related:

No

Resource Category:

Facilities

Quantity:

1

Unit Cost:

\$37,000.00

TotalCost:

\$37,000.00

Replacement of workstation seating in room 1025.

Enhancement:

The existing workstation seating in room 1025 has is nearly ten years old and increasingly in

disrepair. Having to use broken chairs impacts student equity and affects classroom safety.

Personnel-Related:

No

Resource Category:

Facilities

Quantity:

28

Unit Cost:

\$265.31

TotalCost:

\$7,428.68