



TEACHING STATEMENT

I TEACH VARIOUS AREAS OF DESIGN, RANGING FROM INTRODUCTORY TO ADVANCED, PRINT TO DIGITAL. COURSES I HAVE FACILITATED ARE THE HISTORY OF GRAPHIC DESIGN, VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS, TYPOGRAPHY, THE SENIOR CAPSTONE, AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE.

Creating a learning environment where students see themselves as visual changemakers and influential citizens is integral to the educational background I aim to foster. I help students see themselves in positions of success by sharing compelling creative examples and case studies from design history and theory. To prepare students for the industry demands, I create a strong base for visual communications, typography, and systems thinking while providing clear avenues for experimentation and introducing emerging technologies. With this wide variety of problem-solving techniques, students will be prepared for their future careers' professional and technological hurdles.

The first time I was introduced to a Black designer, I felt like a new world of culture creators had emerged. I discovered a new path in life inspired by people that looked just like me. It is critical to creating this sense of identity and inspiration in the classroom by allowing students to play active roles in developing their creative careers. Through directed processes and creating safe spaces for individual and peer feedback, reflection, and refinement, I equip students with the skills to become inclusive visual interpreters. Sharing the craft of design alongside relevant historical context fosters greater awareness of the societal role of visual communication. I am humbled and honored by the opportunity to witness students continually create and grow in a field or path they never imagined.

By creating a solid foundation that consists of design principles, typography, and technical proficiency in industry standards, I encourage an atmosphere of independence. This confidence in decision-making leads students to discover their natural abilities and work to hone their unique craft. Rule-guided assignments and various classroom teaching methods, including problem-defining, lectures, demonstrations, student-led tutorials, group critiques, one-on-one sessions, and formal hands-on exercises, allow students to find their motivation.

All assignments emphasize research and process. I ask students to reflect and critique work during all stages in a safe environment. By inviting peer feedback from fellow educators and design professionals who visit and participate in class allows me to assess, rethink, rebuild, or refresh projects. As a design practitioner in education, I aim to provide students with the necessary tools for navigating and confidently experimenting in an ever-changing and challenging climate. By interpreting the past, present, and future design process through a lens of trends and innovation, I believe we can dismantle systems of oppression and injustice to create globally aware citizens.

Students must be able to examine the multiple ways in which complex ideas and messages are represented in visual form. Students require guidance in developing personal work habits and practicing working as a team. Finally, students need to continually build their skills and learn about design inside and outside the classroom as lifelong learners. By teaching my students an aesthetic rooted in research and historical context, I broaden art-historical inquiry and technical skills that can aid student careers beyond the creative industry.

In addition to my teaching and design careers, I am pursuing an M.A. in Art History to gain further knowledge in graphic design history and the profession. I am dedicated to fostering student success with mentorship opportunities, reviews, workshops, and events. I have been the faculty advisor for Prototype (the KU AIGA Student group), faculty lead for the Visual Communication Senior Show, participated in the School of Architecture and Design's DEIB Leadership committee, and served on the AIGA KC board in various capacities, including President Emeritus.



YEAR	ACTIVITY	
2022 – Present	Education	M.A. Student, The Kress Foundation Department of Art History University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas
		<p>FIELDS OF STUDY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Black American Art and Design• French Influence on the Harlem Renaissance
2012 – 2016		B.F.A. Double Major; Graphic Design + Art History Kansas City Art Institute, Kansas City, Missouri
2021 – Present	Appointments	Multi-term Lecturer (non-tenure track), Visual Communications School of Architecture and Design, The University of Kansas
2021 – Present		Assistant Professor, Graphic Design School of Arts + Design, Johnson County Community College
2020 – 2021		Adjunct, Visual Communications School of Visual & Communication Arts, Avila University
2022 – Present	KU Committees + Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Committee Member, KU Architecture & Design DEIB Leadership School & Department Committees• Faculty Advisor, Prototype AIGA KC Student Group• Coordinator, Senior Show 2022 + 2023• KU Design Camp
2019	Professional Training	Kansas City Chamber of Commerce Diversity and Inclusion Workshop
2022	Professional Awards	A17 “A” Award, AIGA KC Design Awards & Celebration
2021		A16 “A” Award, AIGA KC Design Awards & Celebration
2020		A15 “A” Award, AIGA KC Design Awards & Celebration
2017		GDUSA, American Graphic Design Award, Silver
2016		GDUSA, American In-House Graphic Design Award
2015		KCAI Marcia Lausen Award
2014		KCAI Rick Poynor Award
2012		KCAI Professor’s Scholarship



YEAR

ACTIVITY

2022– Present

Industry Service

Board Member, Diverse Business Committee,
Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce

The KC Chamber's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion activities are guided by its Diverse Business Committee, which includes Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion professionals and representatives from businesses, foundations, nonprofits, and the community. The mission of the Diverse Business Committee is to affirm, enact and advocate for the KC Chamber's four pillars of diversity and inclusion throughout the Chamber and its programming. Its vision is to create an all-embracing Chamber that maximizes opportunities to develop, promote, educate, and advocate for a diverse workforce and diverse-owned businesses.

ICON 12 Co-Vice President

The co-Vice President of the ICON 12 executive committee will support appointed President Sara Barnes and co-Vice President Grace Danico. ICON is a 4-day event featuring paper presentations by top educators, workshops led by and for illustrators, a marketplace, an exhibition showing original works, a juried animation screening, and two full days of main-stage presentations.

2022

Visiting Artist, Anderson Ranch Arts Center

Anderson Ranch in Snowmass Village, Colorado, hosts a two week-long Visiting Artist program. The Visiting Artists Program is a core component of the Anderson Ranch experience with invited artists of all disciplines. The program allows artists the time and space to complete projects within their area of expertise and explore new work. Visiting artists engage with the creative energy of our students through studio visits and critiques and contribute to the Ranch community with lectures. The program provides a mutually beneficial relationship infused by a direct and meaningful exchange between our community, residents, and the public.

Speaker, AIGA Phoenix Design Week

Phoenix Design Week hosted Sam as a speaker during a two-day conference. Design Week includes a week-long series of events organized by community volunteers for creative professionals bringing together world-class speakers and local experts for two full days of actionable insights, hands-on learning, and fire-fueling inspiration. Programming consists of meetups, workshops, talks, and social gatherings held by individual artists, creative companies, and organizations that serve the design community in some way.

Keynote Speaker, ICON 11 the Illustration Conference, Kansas City

Sam presented at ICON 11: The Illustration Conference as the main-stage keynote speaker in Kansas City, MO on July 29 – June 2, 2022. ICON is a 4-day event featuring paper presentations by top educators, workshops led by and for illustrators, a marketplace, an exhibition showing original works, a juried animation screening, and two full days of main-stage presentations.



YEAR

ACTIVITY

2022

Industry Service Cont.

Workshop Lead, KU High School Design Camp, Pathways to Design

Facilitated the second installment of the collaboration between KU's School of Architecture and Design, Pathways to Design, Prep KC, and the Hickman Mills School District. Students participated in a hybrid personal branding workshop where they created and explored brands, logos, and graphic design. The week consisted of three virtual lectures and one in-person presentation day, where participants shared their own uniquely created responsive logo system and brand assets.

Workshop Lead, KU High School Design Camp

Facilitated a week-long summer Design Camp for high school students. The workshop hosted 20 students who created and explored the basics of block printing with linoleum carving. The week consisted of lectures, hands-on learning, and a final presentation day, where participants shared their uniquely created posters and processes.

Guest Lecuture, Kansas City Art Institute Foundations Seminar

Guest Lecture, Art & Design Department, Missouri State University

Sophomore Portfolio Review, KU Multicultural Design Scholars Program

Speaker, AIGA KC, Techniques of Trends Keynote

Sam co-hosted a keynote with colleague Andra Khoder of the Trends and Innovations department at Hallmark. This event dove into the science behind forecasting trends and unraveling the philosophies of how to add trending elements to your content.

Guest Lecture, Pathways to Design, Grandview High School



YEAR	ACTIVITY
2021	<p>Industry Service Cont.</p> <p>Guest Lecture, KU Multicultural Design Scholars Program</p> <p>Workshop Lead, KU High School Design Camp Facilitated a week-long summer adaptation of KU's Design Camp. The collaboration between KU's School of Architecture and Design, Pathways to Design, Prep KC, and the Hickman Mills School District was coordinated by April Czarnetzki, Student Recruitment Coordinator. The workshop hosted 20 high school students who received a scholarship from KU to attend. Students participated in a hybrid personal branding workshop where they created and explored brands, logos, and graphic design. The week consisted of three virtual lectures and one in-person work/presentation day, where participants shared their own uniquely created responsive logo system and brand assets.</p> <p>Speaker, AIGA National, "One Designer, One Work," Virtual Lecture Series</p> <p>Meditation Lead, AIGA KC, "How to Take Care of Yourself" Panel</p>
2020–2022	<p>Juror, Journalism Educators of Metropolitan Kansas City Contest</p> <p>AIGA KC Keynote with Ashleigh Axios Organized and hosted Ashleigh Axios, Chief Experience Officer and Co-owner at Coforma.</p> <p>Panelist, Kansas Scholastic Press Association Fall Conference, "Good Stuff"</p> <p>Juror, Center for Architecture & Design "Raise Your Voice" Poster Contest</p> <p>Panelist, Johnson County Community College Student Showcase</p>
2019	<p>AIGA KC Keynote + Student Workshop with Liz Jackson Organized a workshop and hosted Liz Jackson, Founding Member of the Disabled List.</p> <p>Guest Lecture, St. Theresa Art Department</p> <p>Panelist, KCAI Alumni Panel</p> <p>Guest Lecture, Blue Valley Schools Art Department</p> <p>Workshop Lead, IIDA KC Student Portfolio Workshop Organized a workshop on creating a professional design portfolio using Adobe InDesign.</p> <p>Guest Lecture, School of Arts + Design, Johnson County Community College</p>



YEAR	ACTIVITY
2018	Industry Service Cont. Planning Committee, Made in the Middle 2018
2017–2018	AIGA KC Portfolio Day Organization of 70+ students and 35+ design professionals of full day portfolio reviews and roundtable discussions.
2016–2017	AIGA KC Young & Hungry Organized and hosted panel for young designers on entrepreneurship & freelancing.
2016	AIGA KC Design Futures Organized and hosted a diverse panel of creatives for middle school students and parents.
2015–2021	AIGA Board, Kansas City (National Association for Design, AIGA)
	<p>ROLES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inagural Student Advocate• Director of Education• Director of Operations• President• Advisory Committee Member• President Emeritus
2015	Guest Lecture, Rockhurst Art Department
2012–2014	Officer, Artspace Student Advisory Council, The Kansas City Art Institute The ArtSpace Advisory Council is a group of ambitious students who act as collaborative liaison between the ArtSpace staff and the student body. As an intermediary group, ASAC create meaningful projects, interactions, and dialogue for the student body using the ArtSpace's resources and xprograms focusing on topics relevant to contemporary art practice.
2012–2013	Youth Friends Mentor, Academy for Integrated Arts (AFIA) AFIA is a tuition-free charter school that serves pre-K through 6th-grade students (in the Kansas City Public School district) through the arts — dance, music, visual art, and theatre — to learn core academic subjects. As a Youth Friends Mentor, Sam led art projects associated with art historical figures and movements.