Self-Reflective Statement

I have always thought the most challenging aspect of my work is creating a balance between professional practice, teaching, and university service. In the past three years, I have seen some challenges and have made great strides in all three areas. Completing my MFA in the spring of 2009 gave me deep personal satisfaction as well as providing a springboard for my continued development as a teaching scholar and artist. This experience has opened many doors to exhibiting my work and developing future installations. Furthermore, I’ve been given the opportunity to serve the university in multiple capacities.

Professional / Scholarly Development

As I mentioned, completing my MFA in the spring of 2009 gave me deep personal satisfaction as well as providing a springboard for my continued development. This year I have been invited to show work in two juried exhibitions in the Los Angeles area – Made in California at the Brea Art Gallery, Brea and Brand 40: Works On Paper Brand Library Art Gallery, Glendale. Since my last contract renewal, I have shown work in 8 group and 2 solo exhibitions. My solo show Exquisite Flaws was the inaugural exhibition in the newly named Nan Rae Gallery.

Fascinated by the imperfections in written or spoken communication, I create work inspired by language. My sculptural works use words to explore visual structure as a replacement for verbal dialogue. Creating a conversation between intuition and information, these objects are lyrical sequences, which express that which I am intensely aware of, but cannot put into words. The abstracted and ambiguous sculptures use both presence and absence of language to articulate the experience of word combinations. The results are objects that create puzzles—which are not intended to be resolved but instead–are intended to begin a dialogue. I invite you to visit my website at cateroman.com to see images of my work.

In 2010, I was an invited speaker at the TypeCon Education Forum presented by the Society of Typographic Aficionados, where I presented the cultural typography posters I created for Typography 2. It was one of these posters that received the Best of Show award at the AIGA (American Institute of Graphic Arts) Emerge Exhibition.

This year, I have been fortunate to present at two more prestigious conferences. In July at the Assessment in the Arts Conference at the Rocky Mountain College of the Arts in Denver Colorado, Sue Vessella and I presented An Innovative Methodology Using Visual Information Systems for Assessment in Creative Disciplines, also co-authored by Behnoush McKay. And in October of this year, the three of us presented our paper Cultivating Diverse Perspectives in a Global Community: Visual Communication and Social Responsibility, at the AACU (American Association of Colleges & Universities) Conference on Social Responsibility held in Long Beach.

Finally, we have just been notified that An Innovative Methodology Using Visual Information Systems for Assessment in Creative Disciplines has been accepted for...
presentation at the 2012 Hawaii International Conference on Arts & Humanities held in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Teaching Effectiveness
In the past two and a half years, I have continued to develop my courses as well as write new ones. I have taught Typography 1 and 2, Digital Production, Design Symposia, Communication Design, Graphic Design 3, Portfolio Presentation, Publication Design, and Magazine Design. The work that student’s produce in Communication Design has became an integral part of the presentation *Cultivating Diverse Perspectives in a Global Community: Visual Communication and Social Responsibility*. This co-authored presentation by Sue Vessella, Behnoush McKay, and myself was very well received at the recent AACU Conference on Social Responsibility in Long Beach. The positive feedback from the larger educational community on our student’s work is by far one of the best ways to assess my teaching effectiveness.

The evaluations on my course surveys are quite positive and consistent. There are a few areas that I would like to address. In the spring and fall of 2010, participating adjunct Brian Herbst and I attempted to co-teach two courses: Typography 1 and Digital Production. The idea was that the students could benefit from our combined expertise while giving me a chance to mentor Brian into a class he had never taught before – Typography 1. Although this was not a complete disaster, it did not play out as we had hoped. After much consideration we feel this is not a good direction for our students at this level as it only generates confusion.

I did notice a few low scores and remarks that I was not as available as I could have been during spring 2010. It was at this time that I suffered a heartbreaking personal loss. Spring 2010 became a very challenging semester and I know my teaching suffered. I am extremely conscientious about making time for students often well beyond my office hours, however, under the circumstances, my absence during this semester could not be helped.

Along with my usual course load, I have made myself available for Independent and Directed Studies and Collaborative Projects. I had a great opportunity to partner with the Animation Department in a Workshop to create training graphics and a video for Burbank Airport’s first responders in order to sharpen their skill at disaster sites.

This has also been an exciting year for the Graphic Design students in the greater design community as they have begun to receive national and regional recognition for their work. One of my students received a Best of Show Award and Scholarship at the AIGA Emerge Exhibition with a poster that was created in my Typography 2 class. This juried exhibition is a yearly 13-school competition and draws students from most of the major art schools in the Greater Los Angeles area. I continue to mentor and manage student participation in competitions and I expect to see more awards in the coming years.

University Service
After a two-year appointment to the Personnel Committee (2009-2011), it is an honor to have been elected to the Senate, where I currently serve. This is a wonderful opportunity to learn more about faculty governance and my role as a member of the
Woodbury Faculty. I have also sat on search committees for Interior Architecture and Communications furthering my knowledge of University policy’s and procedures. As Assessment Officer for the Graphic Design Department, I collect and analyze data, create yearly reports, and make recommendations to the Chair. This work keeps me involved both during and in the preparation for the WASC and NASAD visits.

I continue to serve the University though my support of MCD and Graphic Design Department events. I have represented MCD at multiple National Portfolio Day events for which I designed the event tablecloths. These tablecloths received great accolades and as a result were also created for the Admissions Department’s use. My design for the 80th Anniversary of Graphic Design postcard translated into invitations (both web and print), flyers, and programs. For this event, I encouraged student involvement by assigning a poster to be designed for display in the foyer of the Fletcher Jones Auditorium. These posters were so successful that one has been selected by Chair, Sue Vessella to promote the Woodbury University Graphic Design Department in high schools.

Most recently, I worked closely with Sue Vessella and Behnoush McKay at David Rosen’s request to enter the 2012 CHEA (Council for Higher Education Accreditation) Award for Outstanding Institutional Practice in Student Learning Outcomes. The awards will be announced at the beginning of January.

I am now beginning to look for areas where I can take on more leadership roles while still balancing with my teaching and professional practice.

In conclusion, my accomplishments in the past three years will fuel what is yet to come. I am excited about my new status within the educational community as well as the art world and am currently working on a new project in conjunction with the Studio for Southern California History in Chinatown. Thank you for your consideration in the renewal of my 3-year contract. I look forward to continuing to be a dedicated and energetic member of the Woodbury community.