

SERVICE SUMMARY Karen Gergely

In many ways my service, like my teaching, is linked to my artistic practice of social engagement. Often socially engaged artists find themselves becoming facilitators and workers behind the scenes, while others take the main stage and shine. This model has always been my method of leading and serving. Although I do love being in front of a classroom and on a stage, it's my preference to empower others to take the lead and help them achieve their version of success. I believe that I engineered for service and am proud of the work I do. I hope that what I do makes the lives of others better.

I have served as the Art Department Coordinator since 2016. This role comes with all its expected responsibilities, and in many ways, these responsibilities are more known to me than five years ago and come with some ease, and in other ways, due to the constant change in leadership at the dean and division level, and the restructuring of programs on a university level, this position has been more cumbersome. I've worked really hard to maintain a positive, consistent culture with the Art students throughout these changes and the pandemic. During this time, we suffered the loss of faculty line leaving the department with 2 full-time faculty. We had some turnover in the Graphic Design position and had multiple visiting instructors, all leading to overloads for me to fill in the holes and inconsistency for our students due to these losses. Inevitably, some aspects of a well-oiled department suffer when loss after loss happens. I've tried to maintain a positive, rigorous art making culture above all else, and feel that I have been able to accomplish this amid other losses and pitfalls. In the past year, we hired a Graphic Design professor who has brought stability to that position for the students and has become a true partner in department duties, including recruitment and vision setting. I'm looking forward to continuing this path with him and our students.

I like recruiting. I regularly meet with perspective students interested in the Art, Honors, and Social Change. I also like meeting with undecided students. I have a good relationship with admissions, and I think they consider me reliable and consistent, and know that I'll bring my best for each recruitment session. I am honest with students and parents, providing them with the reality of what they can achieve with an art degree, which is sometimes counter to what they might assume. I find it easy to get excited about a program that I believe in and curriculum that I have helped build that focuses on concept, research, craft, critical thinking, and social engagement. Bringing in students who are willing to take risks and really challenge themselves makes our program stronger and makes for better global citizens. I feel that I am a good ambassador for Graceland.

I have served on many search committees over the past few years amid much change across the University. I genuinely like this responsibility and take it very seriously. I find it valuable to a part of building this intentional community and am honored to be trusted with this charge. I wish we had the task of building out of faculty colleagues rather than replacing those who left in droves.

As VPA Division Chair for two years, before and during the pandemic, I worked hard to build a culture of collaboration and growth. As part of this duty, before the restructuring occurred and

were shifted to department leadership, I served as the VPA representative on the Curriculum Oversight Task Force to oversee the changes dictated by the NVO (Next Version of Graceland). This committee was among the hardest in which I've served on due to the extreme restructuring and the tasks we were asked to complete and the feelings involved.

The Sustainable Social Justice committee was formed during the pandemic, and I volunteered to be a part of it. As a socially engaged artist and advocate for our students, I felt like this committee aligned with my values and was needed after hearing many student experiences of injustice and iniquity. In its present state, the committee has been streamlined to four active members, with extensions all throughout the university. I serve as the only active Lamoni faculty member. We have been advocating adamantly for a Chief Diversity Officer position, working on the website language and iniquity reporting structure, and setting up a regular guest speaker series on diversity for students, faculty, and staff. We also created a university wide belongingness survey that went out Fall semester that we will analyze this Spring. This survey will become part of an annual check in with the campus in hopes of creating real change. I'm looking forward to active change on campus in this regard.

The Art Department was invited to participate in Graceland's STEM fest last Spring, in which we made it a STEAM event, that included the arts. I engaged a small group of interested students to help with a button making station, of which I heard we were among the most popular stations. I consider this a win for ART in STEM and a learning win for our students! We have already committed to participating this Spring.

I worked with Community member Gary Reese and Jodi Seymore on a fundraising event for the Lamoni movie theater in which we made 100 silkscreens of the Coliseum and presented them for donations at Homecoming. Gary and I recently collaborated on another print of Lamoni Town Hall that will be used for prizes and gifts the city can award. Gary and I also brought members of Liberty Hall to visit my printmaking class and create silkscreened polo shirts for the Liberty Hall Volunteers with my students. We loved this event as the Liberty Hall members as brought potluck and our print students got to show off their skills and help the community. It was a win-win for all involved.

I worked with the Community Development Club to create a mural downtown Lamoni near the coffee shop and am currently working with them and the Sustainability Club to create a mural and monarch waystation downtown Lamoni this spring. I also worked with Max Pitt pushing wheelchairs at two concerts in Kansas City this fall to help raise funds for the international travel and service in Guatemala and beyond. I worked with Gwen Simpson and the Food Pantry Board, of which I was a previously a member, to create a mural inside the new Food Pantry building. With a small group of invested students, we met with Gwen at the site and created a design that felt welcoming. Once it was approved, I worked with my students to realize the mural. It was a fruitful collaboration for all parties involved. My goal is always to teach my students look for ways to become involved and build the necessary skills to do so.

Outside of my departmental efforts, working with the Honors Program is among the most rewarding work I do. I work closely with the director, Brian White to build curriculum, guest and co-teach, help organize semesterly fieldtrips with students, and take them to the regional and national conferences. I was asked to participate in the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) Partners in the Parks by Brian White, in which we lead students through Glacier National Park to engage in learning, citizen science, and recreation. This is a program I have been able to do twice now and have fallen in love with it. I believe in its mission and have recently been asked to co-chair the Partners in the Parks committee on the national level through the NCHC, which I am very excited about!

On a national level, I served three years as an elected member of the College Art Association (CAA) Education Committee which focuses on the pedagogical needs of students, innovative accessible curriculum for professors, adjunct privileges, and equipping graduate students for the future. As part of my service, I conducted mock interview workshops at the conference for young professionals and have co-lead a round table on Teaching Social Practice. As part of this committee, focused on publications and was in charge of organizing and producing CAA Conversations, a podcast series of pedagogical interviews with professors and artists: <http://www.collegeart.org/programs/podcasts>. I am currently serving as a member of the Services to Artists Committee (SAC) for CAA and have been preparing and curating programming for the conference next month in Chicago. I will be leading panels on Mysticism in Art and Zine culture.

Finally, as a general goal, I help where I can. Maybe students, along with staff and faculty, come to me with requests to help with student functions, events, and projects. I was asked by students to be the faculty representative for SAGE, Graceland's ally group on campus. We collaborate with COSA for Art Making nights in the department, I've led "Paint and 'Sip'" functions, judged campus wide Bob Ross painting events, helped Humanities students with the vespiary, organized Halloween Printmaking parties for the campus, and helped many Graceland Houses host silkscreen parties in the shop. I was asked to collaborate with SGA for a student driven mural competition that resulted in a really beautiful mural on the mail floor of the library. Energy feeds energy and the more people we can get excited about art and the change it can make, the better we all are. I'm happy to be serving in this capacity.