

# Application for Promotion to Distinguished Professor

**CHARLES BENEKE**  
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Myers School of Art  
Professor of Art  
Printmaking Area Coordinator  
Assistant Director  
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## Service

### Service to the Myers School of Art Printmaking Area Coordinator

Serving as the Printmaking Area Coordinator is a considerable task as it is the only area in the school with heavy, technical equipment that does not have a technician. It has become even more time consuming now that I have had to take on all of the responsibilities my colleague Prof. Hui-Chu Ying, who was laid off in the reduction in force of 2020. Despite these challenges, the shop runs smoothly and functions well as both a learning environment and community space for students.

As Printmaking Area Coordinator I:

- purchase all materials necessary to run the printshop,
- purchase all supplies for Introduction to Printmaking, Relief/Screenprint, Intaglio/Lithography, Print Matrix, and Multiples and Multiplicity, and Special Topics in Printmaking students need for an entire semester's work. Supplying materials for students ensures that students get the proper materials on time at the lowest possible cost,
- work continuously to maintain and repair printshop equipment to ensure that students are working with equipment that functions effectively and safely,
- work continuously to clean and reorganize the printshop to create a more efficient use of our space and facilitate a more effective delivery of our curriculum,
- supervise student workers in the printshop,
- purchased and restored a Chandler & Price Old Style letterpress dating from between 1895 and 1905, and
- purchased and installed an Epson 7900 inkjet printer.

## Mentoring

Mentoring is one of my greatest pleasures as a professor. I work to meet students where they are in their careers as developing artists and help them to accomplish their aspirations. Mentoring is often inspiring, but can also be challenging when students are not meeting expectations, whether they are ones they hold form themselves or ones required to meet their educational goals. Mentoring is not only serving individuals, but also groups. I serve as the mentor for the MSA print club, APE—Akron Print Enthusiasts.

For me mentoring is among many other things:

- creating relationships with students based upon genuine interest and appreciation,

## Service Activity Since Promotion to Professor in June 2013

To review Service Letters of Support please visit:  
<https://www.charlesbeneke.com/distinguished-professor-application/>

### University of Akron

- 2021 Faculty Senate
- 2019-20 Distinguished Professor Review Committee
- 2016-17 Program Review Committee, Co-chair

### Myers School of Art

- 2023-24 NASAD 2025 Reaccreditation Self-Study Coordinator/Writer  
Printmaking Area Coordinator  
Planning Committee  
Scholarships & Grants Committee
- 2021-22 Printmaking Area Coordinator  
HLC BFA Annual Assessment Report Coordinator  
Scholarships & Grants Committee, Chair  
Not On My Watch Student Health & Safety Initiative Founder & Coordinator
- 2020-21 Printmaking Area Coordinator  
HLC BFA Annual Assessment Report Coordinator  
Scholarships & Grants Committee, Chair
- 2019-20 Printmaking Area Coordinator  
Faculty Advisor  
Foundation Review Coordinator  
HLC BFA Annual Assessment Report Coordinator  
Scholarships & Grants Committee, Chair
- 2018-19 Printmaking Area Coordinator  
Faculty Advisor  
Foundation Review Coordinator  
Director Review Committee, Chair
- 2017-18 Foundation Area Coordinator  
Exhibitions Committee
- 2015-16 Printmaking Area Coordinator  
Myers School of Art RTP Committee, Chair  
Emily Davis Gallery, Interim Director  
Exhibitions Committee  
Curriculum Committee
- 2014-15 Printmaking Area Coordinator  
Myers School of Art RTP Committee, Chair  
Emily Davis Gallery, Interim Director, Spring Exhibitions Committee  
Curriculum Committee
- 2013-14 Printmaking Area Coordinator  
Myers School of Art RTP Committee, Chair  
Residency Committee, Chair

- seeing and respecting students for who they are,
- listening deeply and giving students the space to be heard and understood,
- putting students and their educations first,
- fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment,
- being available and accessible for students,
- responding promptly to emails and messages,
- assisting students in sourcing information, materials, and additional resources to support their growth,
- helping students problem solve technical and aesthetic challenges,
- connecting students with other students, faculty, staff, and organizations within and beyond the university,
- demonstrating how to conduct oneself in a professional and collegial manner,
- being honest and direct while also empathetic and thoughtful in the delivery of criticism, and
- looking out for students' physical and mental health and overall wellbeing in the learning environment.

#### Additional Myers School of Art Service

- Currently organizing and writing the MSA NASAD self-study for our 2025 reaccreditation review.
- Currently serving as the MSA Assistant Director.
- Organize and run the annual Made@Myers Holiday Shop with Prof. Sherry Simms.
- Serve actively on MSA committees.
- Wrote the Myers School of Art's BFA Higher Learning Commission reports from 2019 to 2021.
- Wrote the 2017-18 MSA Program Review.
- Organized the 2015 NASAD Review Exhibition for the school and its accompanying school *Looking Good* community celebration.

#### University Service

##### Associate Dean of the Graduate School

I served as the Associate Dean of the Graduate School for the University of Akron from January 2016 to August 2017. As the University of Akron does not have any graduate programs

in the visual arts, I may have seemed an unexpected member of the university faculty to serve as the Associate Dean of the Graduate School. My skills as a keen listener and impartial party, however, put me in the position to attend to my responsibilities with an unbiased mind and equitable approach. While fulfilling this role, I was also continuing to teach one course per semester. The duality of my workplace obligations placed me in the position of simultaneously dealing with the complexities of the concerns of both an administrator and a faculty member. Through my observations I was made keenly aware of the ways that distinct roles in hierarchies can create bias and conflict, whether real or perceived. As I have moved forward in my career, I have made sure to always examine circumstances from a high perspective and reflect unhurriedly to ensure that my efforts invariably place understanding, compassion, and outcomes with shared benefits as primary goals.

Key roles as Associate Dean of the Graduate School included:

- facilitating the review and approval process of new graduate programs with the Ohio Board of Higher Education and coordinating the university's review of new and revised graduate programs at other Ohio universities.
- collaborating to develop and implement the review process for all programs at The University of Akron as mandated by the Ohio Board of Higher Education and the Higher Learning Commission.
- serving as a member of the team charged by upper administration to assess and reallocate Graduate Assistant stipends and tuition awards while reducing the Graduate School's budget by \$12 million over two years to help

#### Regional

##### Curated Storefront and

##### ART—Art Resources Transformations

2018-Present Board Member  
2020-23 Secretary

#### National/International

##### Southern Graphics Council International

2018-20 President  
Web Designer

2013-18 Awards Committee, chair

2014-16 Member-at-Large

2012-13 Awards Committee

##### Mid-America Print Council

2016 Nominations Committee, chair

2010-14 MAPC Journal Design Liaison

2008-14 Webmaster

##### Morgan Art of Papermaking Conservatory and Educational Foundation

2012-Present Advisory Committee Member

2008-12 Board Member

2010-12 Marketing Committee, Chair

#### Juror

2018 Fresh 2018, Summit ArtSpace, Akron, Ohio.

2017 Fresh 2017, Summit ArtSpace, Akron, Ohio.

2015 Ohio Scholastic Art Awards Northeast Region Portfolio Competition, Kent State University Stark Campus, Canton, Ohio.

2014 Ohio Scholastic Art Awards Northeast Region Portfolio Competition, Kent State University Stark Campus, Canton, Ohio.

2013 Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Ohio Excellence in Visual Arts, Columbus, Ohio.

the university avert looming financial problems. In this role I prepared and helped analyze all of the data tables necessary for this process. This exceptionally challenging task taught me the importance of research, developing reliable data sets, and gathering the input of all stakeholders to help inform weighty economic, strategic changes to policy. The development of thoughtful plans with diverse members of the university community was achieved through building consensus and a desire for collective success. It was an invaluable experience for me.

### **Northeast Ohio Regional Community Service**

Service to the Akron and Northeast Ohio communities has been a consistent part of my career including:

- serving since 2018 on the board and as the 2020-23 secretary of The Curated Storefront and Art Resources Transformations, a non-profit that works with local organizations and property owners to use art as a vehicle for cultural change and economic rejuvenation;
- designing and printing 1500 letterpress cards as donor gifts for the opening of Grace House, an Akron hospice for the homeless,
- designing and printing posters for Akron organizations led by Planned Parenthood promoting COVID vaccinations in Akron's black communities, and
- serving on the board of the Morgan Art of Papermaking Conservatory and Educational Foundation in its earliest days, chairing its Marketing committee, and currently being listed as a member of its advisory board.

### **National and International Service to the Printmaking Discipline**

I served as the 2018-20 president of the SGC International (SGCI), the nation's largest printmaking organization, and the 2008-10 president of the Mid-America Print Council (MAPC). I am the only individual who has served as president of both organizations. I served in various other board positions for SGCI & MAPC as well from 2002 to 2020.

### **Southern Graphics Council International**

My time as the president of SGCI, Southern Graphics, was especially rewarding in the work that we did to build inter-cultural relationships and work towards greater diversity, equity, and inclusivity for our organization and our partners. The culmination of these efforts was to be our annual conference held in San Juan, Puerto Rico. The entire conference was focused upon creating relationships with and access for our fellow print communities in Puerto Rico, the Caribbean, and Latin America. One of the key events for the conference was a plenary panel addressing diversity and inclusion in the printmaking community followed by four breakout groups to define areas of and plans for improvement for our organization relative to the historically marginalized and under-supported members of our community. Unfortunately, it became clear that it was necessary to cancel the conference in light of the impending COVID-19 pandemic. I felt that it was our ethical responsibility to cancel the conference shortly before the pandemic was declared as bringing 800+ printmakers to the island would certainly have had dire effects upon the Puerto Rican people for whom there were no COVID cases to date. At that point I began consulting with homeland security expert Juliette Kayyem and connecting with a pro-bono lawyer and printmaking advocate in New York to invoke the force majeure clause in our contracts. With the conference canceled it then became my responsibility to lead the refunding of registration fees to printmakers who had planned to attend while looking out for the financial security of the organization. This entire process was heartbreaking, but I am comforted knowing that I was able to lead the organization's effort to navigate this crisis in a way that respected our members and the conference stakeholders, protected the integrity of the organization, and provided complete transparent for the membership.

I am proud of the relationships we built with the Puerto Rican art community—artists, printmakers, schools and universities, museums, benefactors, and the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture—and that we were able to raise funds to donate a lithography press to the Universidad de Puerto Rico Rio Piedras as a gesture of support and appreciation for welcoming SGCI. Work towards greater recognition of commonalities, shared understanding, and outcomes that are mutually beneficial should always be a primary guiding principles.

During my tenure as president I was also able to lay the groundwork for continued organizational growth through leading our board's many efforts in the :

- examination and revision of the organization's bylaws and guiding documents;
- refinement of its accounting procedures;
- shifting of finances from a calendar to a fiscal year;
- rebranding of the organization and construction of a new website;
- development of a conference programming/social networking app; and
- practice of more transparent communication about the president's work, board activity, and organization finances.

## **Mid America Print Council**

When I was president of The Mid America Print Council it was a lively, yet much simpler, more grassroots organization. I was faced immediately with trying to rescue an organization on the brink of financial disaster. With \$1,500 in our bank account, we were no longer able to function as we had been. It was time to bring the organization into the 21st century with its financial practice, update its image, pair back expenses, and define new revenue streams.

During my tenure as president we:

- redesigned the visual identity of the organization,
- built a new website,
- ceased printing and mailing an extensive journal,
- began publishing an online journal accompanied by a smaller printed mailer to appease members who insisted that a print organization had to have a printed journal,
- made a push for greater participation in our juried members exhibitions,
- began salon exhibitions in which all entries were included,
- worked with partners at the University of Minnesota to host a profitable conference, and
- passed the organization to the next president with \$18,000 in its accounts.