Rhetorical Analysis of Professional Writing Program Documents

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I. Professional Writing: It's Personal
a. Color
The color scheme for this piece encompasses a dark spartan green, which the creator tried to contrast with several warm colors, such as maroon, orange, and cornflower yellow. In addition, the designer includes elements of black and grey that are only present on the front cover. The front and back covers are dominated by the green, grey, and black with hints of the warmer colors, while the inside of the brochure utilizes the warmer red, orange and yellow colors.

This color scheme was probably designed to appeal to contrast, with the spartan green against these warmer colors; but it does not have the most effective result. The color combinations are not very appealing; the black and grey is too harsh and bland to catch someone's eye, and the warm colors look displaced within them. The colors are used a bit more effectively within the brochure, where the green works as a contrast against the warm colors in small doses.

b. Typography
The typography of this brochure is fairly consistent throughout the entire document. It utilizes a combination of serif and sans serif fonts, using serif for the titles and sans for the body text. On the front cover, the title and subtitle are both black, and contact information sits at the bottom of the page in a yellow serif font on a green background. The black title was probably intended to be bold and eye-catching, but it does not stand out very much given the color scheme of the cover.

The text on the inside of the brochure is a little more varied. The titles are all in the same serif font, but each uses a different color to incorporate the color scheme. The sans-serif body text contrasts the title font very well, and provides a clear distinction between the titles and body text. The headers are very creative, with some of them vertically aligned rather than horizontally to change up the design a bit and make it less repetitive. It also creates a sort of direction that the eye follows throughout the design, which is interesting.

c. Text
The text of this document is all left-aligned and broken into paragraphs for the reader's convenience. The blocks of text aren't too overwhelming or long, and are visually appealing on the printed pages. Information is broken into sections with headers and corresponding formats (such as bulleted lists at times and indented information at others).

The brochure blends information with a friendly, conversational tone that effectively presents information without overwhelming the reader with unfamiliar jargon or vague sentences.

d. Images and graphics
There are no images used in this document, but there are graphics implemented throughout. The arrows on the front are presumably meant to imply raising standards, raising grades, and

raising the level of connection between PW and students, but they instead give off a very rigid and sharp feeling. Only one of them is positioned at an angle, which is distracting and disconnected.

Inside the pamphlet, the main shape is a circle--the text is placed within a large circular graphic, and there are smaller decorative circles on every page. This gives on an impression of continuity and connectedness; the lines are fluid and flexible, which reflects the flexibility of the program itself. The chameleon graphic is also used, which is a good effort at creating a brand image for the Professional Writing program. However, the graphic not specifically acknowledged to *be* Clyde the Chameleon, although the same image is used repeatedly to represent chameleons.

II. Branching out: Professional Writing, Professional Growth
a. Color
The colors in the Alumni booklet are representative of the MSU CAB designated colors for alumni, which makes them easily recognizable and categorized. As intended by MSU, the colors characterize the alumni of MSU and the PW program as sophisticated and enterprising, which is reflected in the content of the pamphlet.

b. Typography

The typography of this document is very uniform and consistent. The font is a sans-serif font, and is used throughout the document. If the document features more than one font at all, it is very similar to the font used for both the names of alumni, their job title/location, and the blurb of text beneath their picture.

The front cover uses bold white font against a dark green background, which is both eye-catching and complementary to the white tree image on the front cover. This shows a sense of cohesiveness with the document, but also careful attention to creativity.

In lieu of contrasting fonts, the inside of the pamphlet implements boldness in weight with the font as well as different colors for contrast, which makes for a very striking text design. It was a bold move to use similar (if not the same) fonts; in fact, using an entirely sans-serif font was an interesting choice. Typically sans-serif fonts aren't used for large blocks of text, but it is not too distracting visually in this document. The amount of different font colors (and colors in general) are a bit overwhelming at times and some font colors do not show up on the images very clearly.

All of the font color choices are in line with MSU's brand standards, which connects very nicely with the overall color scheme of the document.

c. Text

All text other than that which appears on the first page is justified to the left. The content of the text gives a brief description of the featured person, their experience with the program, what it's done for them or what it means to them, and what they've been doing since graduating.

d. Images and graphics

Images are exclusively pictures of persons featured in the brochure, and they are all black and white. This draws contrast between the colorful brochure and its subject, making them stand out. All images appear to be roughly the same size, if not exactly the same size.

There are many graphics used in this brochure. The most common and repeated being the circles, which are mostly green and purple—specifically green and purple which adhere to MSU's brand standards (http://cabs.msu.edu/documents/msu_brand_standards_v4.pdf). These circles are a repetition of the circles that appear on the graphic of a tree on the front cover, meant to emphasize the point of networking.

There is a distinct graphic on pages 13 and 14, which is a purple map of the United States over a green background. It visually represents the results of a survey about where PW alumni are living. States in which PW'ers live are emphasized and contain a number (representing the number of graduates in that state) and there is a table in the bottom right corner which gives a summary of the document in list-format. The circles mentioned earlier in this report appear on this page, and are green; the biggest one appears dead-center behind Michigan (the state in which and looks similar to a rising sun.