

Proposal

Overview

The School of Media Arts is proposing a new 72 credit B.F.A. degree program that will provide two specialization paths: one in Digital Filmmaking (DFM) and one in Integrated Digital Media (IDM).

Need

This proposal is in response to the explosion of digital technology in mainstream and professional avenues that has created a high demand for training and specialization in these fields. This change is designed to help extend and define the scope of student work by allowing them a more concentrated area of research and production. Although the current B.A. program successfully serves the needs of students at a general level, offering a B.F.A. would enable the School to address the needs of those students who demonstrate the skill and desire to perform at a professional level. This would significantly increase the artistic value of student work and would have a positive impact on recruitment and retention as well as attracting potential employers seeking out grads with this degree of specialization.

The demand for Digital Filmmaking and Integrated Digital Media in the School of Media Arts is exemplified by the fact that the program has grown every year since its inception and has doubled in size since 2005. Currently the School receives twice as many applications than it can accommodate and the number of student requests for more in-depth training continues to grow.

Institutional and System Fit

The proposed B.F.A. is an expansion of the curriculum currently offered in the B.A. program. It will provide students with a deeper concentration in the chosen area of specialization. After the first two years of course work in Media Arts, the student would declare / select the desired path of specialization in either IDM or DFM for the subsequent two years of the program.

With the B.F.A. proposal comes a change to the existing B.A. in Media Arts. The B.A. program would no longer require the students to elect specific IDM or DFM courses, but rather the requirements would be standard for all students and include selected classes from both offerings. The result would be the elimination of 6 courses and the addition of 1, making it a more streamlined and comprehensive media arts degree. Providing a specific and specialized B.F.A., as well as a broad and comprehensive B.A., allows the School of Media Arts to meet the educational goals of a wider range of students.

The proposed B.F.A. program will help maintain and enhance our position at the

leading edge of artistically integrated digital technology, culturally connected media, and networking connectivity. This would serve to multiply the University's draw to students of a high performing level, thus attracting recognition of prospective employers.

Program Details

The proposed program consists of combining existing courses (one of which will be redesigned) with 5 new courses. The faculty load will be re-organized to accommodate the new program and no new faculty resources will be required. Six current courses will be deleted, so this proposal is revenue neutral.

Students pursuing the B.F.A. in either the Integrated Digital Media or Digital Filmmaking specialization must complete the following prerequisite courses:

101L Intro to Media Arts
112A Intro to Non-linear Editing
102 Digital Technology in the Arts
111A Integrated Digital Art

A G.P.A. gate based on the prerequisite courses is in effect as a requirement for advancement into the next courses.

202 Intro to Motion Design
210 Creation of Media Story
221 Fundamentals of Digital Imaging
251 Digital Video Production Techniques
300 Visions of Film
325 Fundamentals of Digital Animation

Students now declare an area of specialization in IDM or DFM and undergo the application process involving the submission of a portfolio for faculty review. Students accepted in their prospective areas will take the following courses: (* designates a new course).

IDM specialization:
222 Fund of Digital Compositing
301 Digital Film Practices
321 Digital Image Techniques
322 Digital Compositing I
***326 Intro to Cinematography**
330 Principles of Sound Design
340 Principles of Web Design
422 Digital Compositing II
425 Technical Digital Animation
440 Web Design Technology

***445 Sound for Digital Media**
450 Topics in Film/Media
***456 Directing**
460 Senior Project

DFM specialization:
252 Screenwriting
301 Digital Film Practices
***326 Intro to Cinematography**
330 Principles of Sound Design
340 Principles of Web Design

355 Directing Fiction Film
357 Techniques of Non-linear
Editing

***415 Screenwriting**
442 Experimental Film

***446 Sound for Film**
450 Topics in Film/Media
455 Visions of Documentary
460 Senior Project
465 Special Projects

Resources

No additional faculty resources will be required to implement this program.

The new program will be able to use existing Media Arts lab space and production equipment. No additional resources will be required to implement this change.

Assessment

Since the inception of the B.A. program in Media Arts in 2006, a significant number of students have been able to begin applying their skills in real world situations. Students have interned at world-class production houses, including Digital Kitchen and Belief Systems; and a substantial percentage of our recent graduates have found employment in their field. Another way to measure the success of the program is the increasing demand from community members and various university organizations for Media Arts students to participate in video, web design, and motion design projects.

Process Leading to Submission

The B.F.A. program was developed with input from students, faculty and industry professionals. In the summer of 2008 the faculty thoroughly reviewed the current B.A. curriculum and in consultation with industry professionals came to the conclusion that although the B.A. provided a solid general training in media arts, a B.F.A. would significantly increase the chances for students to gain professional employment in the industry. As a result the faculty, along with the School Director, began work in the Fall of 2008 on a proposed curriculum for the B.F.A. program and by the summer of 2009 had the finished proposal.

This proposal was reviewed and approved by the affected departments as follows:

Department Name: Media Arts **Date:** 9/21/2009

In addition the deans of the following Schools/Colleges reviewed and approved the proposal:

Dean of: College of Visual and Performing Arts Date: 9/22/2009

The proposal was reviewed and approved by the Faculty Senate at the University of Montana: Date: 12/10/2009

[No outside consultants were employed for the development of this proposal.]