

Interdisciplinarity@WMU- Phase One Planning Template

1. **Brief Overview:** Provide a brief overview of the proposed interdisciplinary initiative. What types of questions would the initiative ask? What types of complex problems would it seek to solve?

The Graphic Design program proposes the following initiatives to further foster collaborative and interdisciplinary partnerships across the university and beyond.

- Restructuring the Graphic Design curriculum (combination of Color for Graphic Design with Visual Aesthetics and discontinuation of Design Applications) to allow graphic design students to take more Art electives within the Frostic School of Art.
- Open Special Topics and GD for non-majors courses to students from other disciplines as space allows.
- Design Center plans on offering more collaborative projects with other departments.
- Underclass collaborations with other departments
- Collaborations between Graphic Design and Product Design (if Richmond Institute for Design and Innovation is merged more fully with FSoA) — possibility of sharing labs, visiting designers/lectures, study-abroad program, and courses (e.g. design foundations, design history, and writing about design).
- Partnership with Yunnan University

2. **Impacted units:** What existing units, programs, and colleges would be involved in the proposed initiative? What other possibilities for collaboration across campus or in the broader community might exist now or in the future?

- Frostic School of Art
- Graphic Design program
- Richmond Institute for Design and Innovation

Cross-campus interdisciplinary collaborations can be fostered through the Design Center and Special Topics courses.

Partnership with Yunnan University—a possibility of a dual-degree program that would double the current student enrollment.

3. **Impact on teaching, learning, and curricula:** Describe the anticipated impact of the proposed initiative on teaching, learning, and curricula. How might this initiative help to grow enrollment, including by reaching new audiences of learners through continuing education, dual enrollment, or professional certification? How will the proposed initiative positively impact the training of undergraduate and graduate students? How does it enhance our institutional commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion?

The proposed initiative will have a positive impact on the Graphic Design program and its students because it will engage students to think more creatively in relation to the ever-changing

design industry. Graphic Design students will also benefit greatly from learning various topics, perspectives, and research methods from outside of their field.

Although we haven't observed any decrease in student enrollment (applications) for at least a decade, we believe that interdisciplinary engagement can provide a more unique and effective learning experience in preparing our students for the broad requirements of the profession.

The proposed initiative will have a positive effect on other FSoA programs because Graphic Design students will be encouraged to take more Art electives within the FsoA (e.g. Photography, Printmedia, and/or Ceramics). Additionally, our collaboration with Yunnan University will support the WMU's mission of producing globally engaged students and facilitating an inclusive learning environment.

4. **Impact on research and creative activity:** Describe the anticipated impact of the proposed initiative on research and creative activity. How will this initiative promote discovery and creative scholarship? How might it result in increased external funding?

The proposed initiative will have a positive impact on research and creative activity because students will benefit from their exposure to the research and methodological approaches of individuals from different disciplines and fields of expertise. The experience will encourage better problem-solving, creative thinking and broader collaboration.

5. **Efficiencies and/or cost savings:** How might the proposed initiative contribute to increased efficiencies and/or cost savings, for example by reducing administrative positions (e.g. chairs/directors), sharing staff support services and/or by sharing facilities?

The proposed curriculum revision (combination of Color for Graphic Design with Visual Aesthetics and discontinuation of Design Applications) would eliminate the need of hiring any part-time faculty to teach these courses.

6. **Impact on course offerings and workload:** At present, proposed initiatives will only be feasible and sustainable if they can be supported by existing resources, including instructional capacity, faculty and staff time, and facilities. Will the proposed initiative streamline existing course or program offerings? Could the initiative help create more equitable and sustainable workload for faculty, for example, by reducing the need to offer under enrolled courses, reducing the frequency of course offerings or eliminating the need to teach some courses?

The Graphic Design program does not have any under-enrolled courses, and the current faculty workload ensures that quality instruction is offered to meet expectations of program capacity and target enrollment.

The combination of Color for Graphic Design with Visual Aesthetics and discontinuation Design Applications courses will still keep the Graphic Design program in compliance with the

accreditation requirements established by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD), while helping to increase enrollment in other areas of the School of Art.

7. **Additional Information:** What additional information would you like to provide in support of this proposal?

8. **Contact**

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