

Interdisciplinarity@WMU- Phase One planning Template

Version 1 of 2.

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?

FSoA + PD + RIDI = FSoA&D

We propose to realign the Product Design program and Richmond Institute of Design (RIDI) to be fully under the umbrella of the Gwen Frostic School of Art (FSoA) and rename the school to the “Gwen Frostic School of Art & Design” to reflect this change. RIDI could continue to exist as an external-facing fundraising entity but be housed within the School of Art & Design. Additional design programs currently housed in other areas of the university such as Fashion Design and Interior Design could also be combined under this structure. This proposed change would seek to solve the following problems:

- Reduce administrative expenses associated with splitting art and design areas into separate units, or having them function semi-independent of each other as they currently operate.
 - Maintain and increase current interdisciplinary opportunities for art and design students
 - Allow design areas to benefit from shared design courses that could better serve the needs of design students while strengthening enrollments and revenues in the school.
 - Eliminate confusion over existing reporting structures
 - Present a more interdisciplinary identity as a unit
 - Provide additional design areas currently housed in other areas of the University such as Fashion Design and Interior Design a more appropriate home unit. These programs would benefit from the combined collaboration, stability and strength of a larger Frostic School of Art & Design.
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?
 - The Frostic School of Art
 - Richmond Institute of Design and Innovation
 - Fashion Design Program
 - Interior Design Program
 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?

- Shared labs / tools / fabrication facilities between product design, graphic design, sculpture, wood shop etc.
- Shared high-profile visiting designers/lectures
- Shared design-oriented study-abroad programs
- Shared design foundations courses between design areas
- Shared design special topics courses between units
- Increased design history course offerings and an expansion of Art & Design History offerings due to increased enrollments of design students
- Shared writing about design courses between design areas

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?

- More interdisciplinary mixing between art and design areas through shared courses
- More interdisciplinary interactions between art and design faculty
- External funding coordinated through RIDI could involve multiple design areas and the new Kinetic Imaging program.

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?

- Shared unit administrative positions and staff support services
- Shared fabrication facilities
- More areas in the Frostic School of Art & Design could benefit from the fundraising capabilities of RIDI

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 proposal will help streamline existing course or program offerings and better match course offerings to students' needs.
- Potential for shared courses / increased enrollments in under-enrolled courses throughout the Frostic School of Art for all art and design areas.
- Introducing shared foundations and design history courses between design areas (product design, graphic design, fashion design, interior design and potentially kinetic imaging) could better serve students' needs and eliminate redundant courses currently offered separately.

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

8. Contact

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