Montana University System
INTENT TO PLAN FORM

Program/Center/Institute Title: BFA Concentration in Gaming and Interactive Media

Campus, School/Department: UM--Mountain, School of Visual and Media Arts
Expected Submission Date: 9/13/2019

Contact Name/Info: Mark Shogren

To increase communication, collaboration, and problem-solving opportunities throughout the MUS in the program/center/institute development process, please complete this form not more than 18 months in advance of the anticipated date of submission of the proposed program/center/institute to the Board of Regents for approval. The completed form should not be more than 2-3 pages. For more information regarding the Intent to Plan process, please visit http://mus.edu/che/arsa/academicproposals.asp.

1) Provide a description of the program/center/institute.

We propose coalescing select existing courses within the School of Visual and Media Arts, and adding 3 new courses, that in total offer a concentration in Gaming and Interactive Media. The concentration (option) focuses on the 1) fundamentals of coding for games and interactive art, 2) the visual design of these environments 3) the history and theory of gaming 3) content and the user experience. The BFA in Media Arts is a 75 credit undergraduate degree.

2) Describe the need for the program/center/institute. Specifically, how the program/center/institute meets current student and workforce demands. (Please cite sources).

The Gaming and Interactive Media concentration (GIM) responds directly to the workforce and growth of gaming in all three, entertainment, competition, and serious gaming sectors. "Last year, 2018, the US Gaming industry was the largest in the world, and it matched the US Film industry netting $43 billion in revenue (1)." "By 2022", with growth in virtual/augmented/and serious gaming sectors, "the US Gaming industry is predicted to reach $230 billion, leading all world markets (2)."

No such gaming program exists in the state, in fact only 4 lower-division gaming courses exist outside of UM in the MUS. The largest ASUM student group on campus is the gaming group.

(2) "Games software/hardware $165B+ in 2018, $230B+ in 5 years, record $2B+ investment last year | Digi Capital". Retrieved August 24, 2019.
3) Describe how the program/center/institute fits with the institutional mission, strategic plan, and existing institutional program array.

The study and practice of gaming/game design includes many facets and applications. In fact, it is both a format for information and networked data navigation and an expressive form of storytelling. Because the content area serves as a type of format itself, it has application potential in all 6 Communities of Excellence at UM. The history of gaming/computing and game theory are closely aligned with Science and Technology CoEx, and game design and interactive media exemplifies Communication and Artistic Expression CoEx. However, the vast applications possible with serious gaming, those games developed to crowd-source solutions to field-specific design problems, make it a vital partner to Environment & Sustainability, Health and Human Development, and Justice, Policy, and Public Safety CoEx's respectively. Beyond GIM's fit within UM's CoEx and the void it fills within the MUS, it is housed in the School of Visual and Media Arts, a newly merged department that houses two of the few fully online BA degrees in the state. In SVMA, a focus is placed on educating the whole student, partnering with place and the formalization of liberal arts skillsets. It is this combination of coding, interactive media, gaming engines, with skillsets such as tiered problem-solving, empathy, critical analysis and iterative design that make the GIM concentration representative of UM's 21st Century education.

4) Describe how the program/center/institute overlaps, complements, or duplicates existing efforts in the MUS. Describe efforts that will be made to collaborate with similar programs at other institutions. If no efforts will be made, please explain why.

No such program exists in the MUS.

There are 4 lower-division courses in the MUS, 3 at FVCC, and these don't fit the shared foundations program in SVMA, nor do they cover the depth of creative coding content necessary for progression in the proposed concentration. The program would be open to collaboration at other institutions if they existed. GIM may find the most collaboration by leading MUS efforts in serious gaming, crowd-sourcing state-wide solutions for complex problems, engaging local communities with iterative design tools through constructive gaming, GIM will collaborate with the Innovation Factory at UM to cross-program and in design a gaming arena for its eSports team, with the Mansfield Library for a game development and training lab, and work to develop 1-credit modules in gaming innovation. The Missoula youth community is showing considerable interest in gaming education and programming with area middle and high school students will be engaged.

As a leader in gaming within the MUS, UM is excited to break ground in our region, learning through strong partnership with Boise State University's College of Innovation and Design. Due to the established online programming in SVMA, the GIM concentration will be available to distance only students at least through the first year, and may be expanded through the second year as staffing is expanded to mirror new majors.
Montana University System

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Signature/Date

College/School Dean: 9/13/2019

Chief Academic Officer:

Chief Executive Officer:

Flagship Provost*: 9/16/2019

Flagship President*: 9/16/2019

*Not applicable to the Community Colleges.

Date of Final Review:

When submitting the proposal to the BOR, include this signed form with the Level II request.