Art Department curriculum proposal: Visual Communication Design program January 25, 2011

In our era of expanding visual communications, potential students are interested in studying design for information, communication, and interaction. The WOU administration evaluated the viability of attracting students by expanding coursework in graphic design to include more digitally delivered communication, and determined that this effort is a viable initiative.

The art faculty discussed options, and has devised a program that combines the strengths of the current art major with processes that will help student designers think, plan, and communicate visually. Ultimately, the goal is to prepare students to use effective design processes so that they are better able to adapt to (and potentially help develop) methods that meet the needs of a constantly changing field.

The Art Department has proposed a second major, which will be called the Visual Communication Design major. The structure of the new major parallels the current art major. Both are 84 credit hours.

Visual Communication Design students will take art fundamentals in drawing and design, art history, and introductory courses that will prepare them to study in either two or three focus area topics, depending upon their abilities, and career interests.

These sequences are: a.) Graphic Design: Process & Theory/Print, b.) Interactive/Web design, and c.) Digital Motion. Digital motion is the new subject area among these course sequences. The other two are currently part of the art curriculum offerings (although the Interactive/Web courses will change from 400 level to 300 level course numbers as part of this proposal).

All Visual Communication Design students will be required to take the 300 level sequence in Graphic Design: Process & Theory (A320, A321, A322, courses which are currently offered) to practice design skills, learn to pursue effective research, generate ideas, increase awareness of their social and environmental responsibilities as designers, and plan the execution and delivery of visual communications. The aim is that processes learned in this sequence will support student work in any of the focus areas they choose to pursue.

**FOUNDATION CORE – *all required* 21 INTRODUCTION COURSES 15-18**

A115 Beginning Design: 2-D (3 credits) A220 & 221 Intro to Typography & Typographic Structures 3, 3

A116 Beginning Design: 3-D (3 credits) A223 Web Essentials\* *–* ***and/or*** *–* A226 Motion & Narrative\* 3, 3

A117 Beginning Design: Color (3 credits) A230 Intro to Drawing (3 credits)

A119 Digital Presentation for Artists (3 credits) A260 Basic Photography I (3 credits)

A130 Beginning Drawing (3 credits) **PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT COURSES 6-9**

A131 Beginning Drawing Systems (3 credits) A429 Portfolio & Professional Preparation\*  3

A135 Beginning Life Drawing (3 credits) plus one or two upper division courses from prescribed list 3 (or 6)

 **ART HISTORY –*three 4-credit courses)* 12**

**CONCENTRATION AREA SEQUENCES 27**

REQUIRED PLUS CHOOSE TWO SEQUENCES FROM THE FOLLOWING

A320 Graphic Design: Process & Theory 3 A323 Interactive Design: Web Structure & Communication 3

A321 Graphic Design: Form& Communication 3 A324 Interactive Design: Applied 3

A322 Graphic Design: Contemporary Practice 3 A325 Interactive Design: Contemporary Issues 3

 A326 Digital Motion: Systems & Techniques\* 3

 A327 Digital Motion: Communication\* 3

 A328 Digital Motion: Contemporary Issues\* 3

 A420 Print Design: Systems & Techniques 3

 A421 Print Design: Expressive & Structural Design 3

 A422 Print Design: Presentation & Contemporary Issues 3

NEW COURSES ADDED as part of this proposal:

A223 Web Essentials, A226 Motion & Narrative | A 326, A327, A328 - digital motion sequence | A429 – capstone course VCD

Entering the major

Similar to the Art Major, at this time students will not be required to submit a portfolio to apply for the Visual Communication Design program. This process makes both major programs accessible to students with varying levels of previous experience.

Students who wish to pursue the Art Major rather than the Visual Communication Design major, but have an interest in graphic design, may use the A320/A321/A322 sequence (and all of the prerequisites required) as one of the discipline areas in the Art Major. If a student wishes to study additional design topics, s/he will need to take the Visual Communication Design major.

Entering the minor

Students taking majors outside the Art Department who have an interest in communication design may take a Visual Communication Design minor. It is highly recommended that these students seek the help of an advisor during their freshman year. To succeed in the upper division subject sequences they must take art foundation requirements and introductory prerequisite courses in preparation for 15 credits of upper division coursework.

Faculty

Searches for two faculty members have been approved and are in progress at the time of this report. One is a new faculty line, the other is replacement of a faculty member who will retire at the end of spring 2011. These faculty members are scheduled to start Fall 2011.

Classrooms

Two existing spaces in ITC have been identified by the administration as classrooms for offering this program; these will be adapted for use as computer/design studio classrooms. Students will have access to these spaces when classes are not in session.