
Program Planning Summary

Bachelor of Fine Arts in Visual Communication Design

w/ two tracks

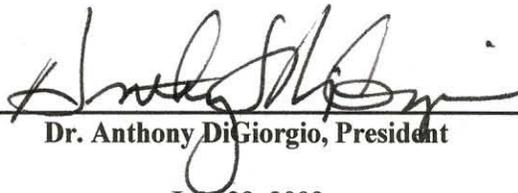
**Graphic Design
Illustration**

offered by

College of Visual & Performing Arts

Department of Design

Winthrop University



Dr. Anthony DiGiorgio, President

July 29, 2009

Program Planning Summary
Bachelor of Fine Arts in Visual Communication Design, 2 tracks
Winthrop University, College of Visual and Performing Arts

- 1. Designation:** New Program Proposal
- 2. Proposed Date of Implementation:** Summer 2010

3. Justification of Need for the Proposed Program

The past decade, especially, has been witness to great changes affecting professions relating to applied design programs. The increased presence of technology into the profession has dramatically increased the creative potential and possibilities of practicing designers. Similarly, there has been an increase in the roles and professional contexts in which applied designers – graphic designers and illustrators – find themselves. Training for professionals employed as graphic designers or illustrators has historically followed a well-established and widely accepted model relating closely to studio preparation of exhibiting “fine” and “studio” artists. However, in this period of development, scholarship and research devoted specifically to the applied design areas has advanced considerably, and – the past quarter century – has seen dramatic and significant changes to the educational programming, and advancements in pedagogy and strategic educational approaches, for developing designers. Nationally, the majority of institutions still follow the historically-practiced degree model. But a significant number of “model” institutions (University of Cincinnati, Kent State University, Virginia Commonwealth, NC State, et. al.) are adopting an approach that distinguishes early “design-oriented” study from “fine arts-oriented” approaches. The results of these different approaches are not without controversy, but have had the effect of distinguishing offerings among competing institutions.

As mentioned above, the professional presence of applied visual designers has broadened to include responsibilities for website and internet development and management; positions in public relations and identity consultation; branding and product development; marketing and strategic promotional concerns; “environmental” and installation graphics; content-responsive information graphics, to name a few. The opportunity for students to more quickly implement applied design content may work to further distinguish them from “artists,” but at the same time can allow them additional opportunity to obtain cross-disciplinary background and training that may better prepare them for supervisory or management responsibilities in any of the above – or other – situations.

Winthrop’s College of Visual and Performing Arts has gone through an administrative restructuring and reorganization, establishing a Department of Fine Arts and a Department of Design as two separate entities. As a result of this, a new structure of governance was implemented. This new governance, combined with the increased demands for student preparation (above), compelled the Visual Communications program to assume responsibility for delivery of foundation-level/lower division courses of study. So, the justification for modifying the program and sequence within Winthrop University is to more appropriately and specifically deliver design-appropriate content to students initially, in the effort of producing distinctive, capably qualified designers for the profession. The justification for modifying the degree conferred from Winthrop University is to better distinguish this as a higher education option to prospective students (and the state), as an alternative to the widely practiced, more “traditional” degree program.

The degree assignment of “Bachelor’s of Fine Arts (in Visual Communications Design)” is appropriate for the degree being proposed by Winthrop conforming to NASAD accreditation standards (and those further detailed in a series of NASAD/ AIGA “white papers”), and practices implemented at institutions offering a similarly constituted degree.

4. Anticipated Program Demand and Productivity

The degree program being proposed is a “conversion” of a previously existing program. As such, the publicity, recruitment, enrollment and productivity pertaining to the existing program will transfer over into the new degree program.

Historical enrollment, retention and matriculation rates for the existing program have been sustained, and indicate a program that is consistently “in demand” and subscribed at- or near- capacity for at least the previous 5 years. Historical productivity rates are also furnished, below, that evidence a sustained, productive program for the university.

BFA – ART; Visual Communications (historical enrollment)															
track	04F	05S	Graduate s	05F	06S	Graduate s	06F	07S	Graduate s	07F	08S	Graduate s	08F	09S	Graduate s
:Graphic Design	71	67	7	71	63	11	61	61	6	78	72	11	81	74	6
:Illustration	18	19	5	19	19	5	18	17	3	30	25	4	20	20	2
Total	89	86	12	90	82	16	79	78	9	108	97	15	101	94	8

BFA – ART; Visual Communications (CHP)												proj.
04F	05S	05F	06S	06F	07S	07F	08S	08F	09S	09F		
N/A	516	535	510	535	516	623	492	1055	867	1191		

The existing program at Winthrop is accredited by the *National Association of Schools of Art and Design* (NASAD), the national accrediting body overseeing programs relating to study in art- and design-related degrees. None of these factors are expected to change, regardless of the nomenclature denominating the degree. Content changes to the degree substantially involve the delivery of 1st year Visual Communication-specific content. All of the proposed changes are consistent with accepted standards and expectations of the specialized accrediting body.

According to the national Bureau of Labor Statistics, career prospects for graduates of this degree program, specializing in either Graphic Design or Illustration, are expected to grow at the national average of 10% through 2016. (<http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos090.htm#outlook>, <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos092.htm#outlook>).

5. Assessment of Extent to which the Proposed Program Duplicates Existing Programs in the State

The proposed program would be the only BFA-level degree program in the state delivered in Visual Communication Design. USC-Columbia offers a BAJMC in Visual Communications (sic), which takes a greater emphasis on the Journalism/Mass Communication aspect of the degree, and has a lesser emphasis on the visual design aspects and training of the degree. As well, by being a BA offering it requires a minor; Winthrop’s proposed degree would be a BFA that emphasizes training from the visual design (including creative, functional and aesthetic) aspects of the degree. Winthrop’s proposed degree will include relatively small numbers of required or elective offerings relating to journalism, advertising and etc. (USC = CIP code 09.0702)

Of 54 institutions held in the SC-CHE index, only 5 institutions (other than Winthrop) are listed as offering a BFA-level degree: Bob Jones University; USC-Columbia; USC-Upstate; Converse College; and Clemson University. Of those, only USC-Columbia and Converse are also accredited by NASAD. Statewide, several institutions (Anderson University, Coker College, Benedict and Limestone) offer BA-level programs of study, with “tracks,” “concentrations” or “emphases” in Graphic Design. Both Bob Jones and South University offer a BS in Graphic Design. With the exception of South University, all of the offerings at other institutions

(regardless of degree level) follow an established and traditional approach to delivery of applied design/ visual design/ graphic design or illustration content. They are (generally) closely allied with early experiences based in fine- and visual- arts studio approaches, aesthetic philosophies, and faculty orientations that (again, generally) seek to provide students with the broadest amount of artistic experience which allows students a wide range of options and opportunity within which to pursue the remainder of their degree. (variously: CIP codes 50.0402, 50.0409, & 50.0701)

Only 3 institutions refer to “Illustration” as a degree component offering, Bob Jones University, Coker College and Benedict. Of these, Bob Jones offers only the Master’s level in Illustration. Coker offers a BA in Graphic Design, Commercial Art and Illustration and Benedict offers a Bachelor’s degree in Graphic Design, Commercial Art and Illustration (sic). (all: CIP code 50.0402)

Winthrop’s proposed program differs from this in that it will intend to deliver design-specific information and understandings, and seek to develop visual design and problem-solving skills in the student, from the first semester of classes. This is similar to how South University has structured their BS degree. Major differences between Winthrop’s proposed degree and South’s current BS include the fact that Winthrop is accredited by NASAD; operates on a semester (as opposed to South’s quarter) credit hour system, and will have a different ordering and sequence in delivery of the (proposed) BFA degree. South’s BS degree has 128 quarter hours (approx. 88 semester hours) in focused Graphic Design study, whereas Winthrop’s proposed degree will have 65 semester hours focused into design/Graphic Design study. Winthrop’s proposed program will emphasize that students should develop responsive, functional, and qualitatively-based solutions appropriate to the contemporary, competitive applied design profession.

6. Relationship of the Proposed Program to Existing Programs at the Proposing Institution

As mentioned, the program being proposed is indicated as a “new” degree program offering, though it is most appropriately viewed as a “conversion” from one that currently exists. The current degree title awarded is confusing and misleading in its wording: as currently offered, Winthrop’s full degree title is the “Bachelor’s of Fine Arts in Art with a concentration in Visual Communication Design”, then appended with either of “- Graphic Design track” or “- Illustration track”, depending on the course of study the student chooses. The BFA degree with concentrations has been offered by Winthrop University at least since AY1986-87, and has been identified with this characteristic “nesting” since Fall 2004.

The new(ly converted) degree, as proposed, would cease offering and awarding of the above. In its place, the “new” degree – the “Bachelor’s of Fine Arts in Visual Communication Design” - would be offered, delivered. The assignment of this degree would more clearly and accurately reflect the content makeup of the program, as well as more clearly identify the program in the context of the institution and to external state, accreditation and recruitment situations.

7. Relationship of the Proposed Program to Other Institutions via Inter-Institutional Cooperation

The proposed program will be offered solely through Winthrop University and will not affect any existing inter-institutional programs.

8. Total New Costs associated with implementing the Proposed Program (general estimates)

Because the curriculum of the new degree program will draw on existing courses and changes to elective offerings within existing degree programs, there are no new costs associated with establishing this degree program. Existing institutional faculty, support staff, instructional facilities and equipment which have been used to deliver the existing degree program are adequate and appropriate to deliver the new program.