ASCC 5/9/2019

200 Bricker Hall 3:00-4:30pm

Approved Minutes

# ATTENDEES: Crocetta, Daly, Daniels, Fink, Grzybowski, Harrod, Heckler, Jenkins, Kline, Kulkarni, Lam, Oldroyd, Puthawala, Roup, Savage, Vaessin

AGENDA:

1. Proposal for an Undergraduate Major in Esports and Game Studies (guest: Deborah Grzybowski)

* Steve Fink: External and internal interests drove the development of this program. The esports industry in Columbus, the Office of Advancement, the Office of Student Life, and multiple student organizations were all interested in the development of the esports major. Randy Smith brought together curricular deans across 5 colleges to see if there was any interest in developing a curriculum. The group of curriculum deans created a faculty curriculum committee to develop the curriculum.
* Deborah Grzybowski: The committee brought in experts from the industry to discuss the curriculum necessary to address industry needs. There are efforts in the industry to make Columbus the hub of esports in the Midwest. The esports industry has indicated that OSU is not graduating students with the necessary skills to fill jobs in esports. This program is a measure to address industry needs.
  + The Office of Student Life, which created an arena for esports, has played a role in this as well. The arena will be available for student use and potentially for classroom use.
  + The committee worked with Theresa Johnson in UITL to do backward design for the program. Backward design made assessment the core of the proposal. The committee broke the curriculum down to three areas in creation, business and use of games, and games for use in rehabilitation. There are plans to add more tracks in business and applied uses in the future. There are also plans to develop more online courses and online certificate programs.
    - The development of the program was similar to the creation of Data Analytics, which started with a core and original tracks and built out the program with additional tracks.
* Meg Daly: Program proposals typically go through extra steps of review by the curriculum panel(s) and would have a motion to approve at this point. Instead, the committee will start with more granular feedback to work with.
* Steve Fink: This did not follow the typical approval process, since the interested parties wanted the proposal moved forward quickly and available to students for the fall.
* Committee member question: Is the goal to have this program start in the fall?
  + Yes, the goal was to have it ready for the fall, pending approval from ODHE.
  + It appears that the curriculum and budget model are not ready to be rolled out in the fall, and ASCC should give constructive criticism.
* Committee member question: Did the committee reach out to the Department of Art, particularly Art and Technology? Students and faculty in the department do research related to video games and game development. It seems that there are assets in the department that were not explored.
  + Steve Fink sent out a memo to chairs of all possibly relevant departments, including the Department of Art, in order to form the committee. The Department of Art has had 3 interim chairs in this period.
  + The curriculum for the program is not fixed. Courses can be added if they fit the curricular goals.
* The Committee expressed their concerns about the financial viability of the program considering the cap on new students in some departments involved. The proposal assumes that this program will bring in a large number of new students, but does not address how new students will be accommodated. Additionally, there is little rationale provided for the number of faculty members that will be hired and where the money will come from to hire them.
  + The money needed to make this program viable will depend on outside investment that the Office of Advancement says will be available. There needs to be a guarantee of how much money will be available. This is a concern for both ASC and the College of Engineering, particularly CSE, given the demand this will place on their courses.
* Committee member question: What happened with the ASC co-lead?
  + Alan Price was the original co-lead, but he went on leave. Scott Swearingen took over as co-lead, but he is new to the university and unfamiliar with the curriculum process. He also went on leave. Mary Anne Beecher has helped with the development of the program in an unofficial capacity.
* Committee member question: What is the reason for wanting to implement this in fall, aside from student interest?
  + Students and the esports industry are interested in the program. It might be the case that this program is not ready for the fall, in which case it can go through another year of development.
* Committee member comment: The plan for management of the program needs to be clear, especially given the lack of leadership from ASC so far. It needs to be a fair and sustainable plan for management for all colleges involved. The administration of this program is very unclear in the proposal.
* Committee member question: It is hard to see the coherence of this program and the rationale for why this is a BS when there is overlap with existing programs. Why isn’t this a minor or a certificate program?
  + This program is very different from existing minors in design and CSE. There is a demand for students who are knowledgeable in esports, and there are jobs available in the esports industry. We are hearing that the industry wants an esports specific program rather than design or CSE.
  + The capstone project will help bring students together from different tracks to better understand the industry. The synergy between the tracks will best serve students. Minors and certificate programs would not prepare students as well for working in the industry.
* Committee member question: Has the committee discussed with the esports industry if this program is what they want from students? Wouldn’t they be better served by students with more in-depth and specific skills in programming and design? Is this major sustainable over time?
  + The industry is growing rapidly, and projections indicate that growth in the industry will continue. This program is not designed to replace designers or programmers. There is a need for management, marketing, and other positions in the field that are not being met by existing programs. So far, student organizations have provided the best opportunity for students to get into the field. We need an academic side to support students too.
* Committee member comment: Communication is included in the program goals, but there are hardly any Communication courses included in the program. The committee should discuss what courses are most appropriate for inclusion in this program with the School of Communication.
* Committee member comment: Students cannot double major in two tracks of the same major (pg. 39).
* Committee member comment: It is good to see ethics in the learning goals. Games are often designed to manipulate the behavior of gamers. It would be good to see a specific course in ethics of game design to better address this issue.
  + Ethics plays a very important role in the curriculum, which will be very obvious in the curriculum map.
* Committee member comment: Some stages in the assessment plan do not seem to be defined (e.g. goal B1 does not have an advanced level but it says that 40% of students should be advanced). Additionally, the assessment plan indicates that some students should be at advanced levels for some goals in their first year, which does not seem correct. The assessment plan would be more useful with a curriculum map.
* Committee member comment: It seems that the current four-year plans do not allow for student to take foreign language in their first year. It would be better if students took their foreign language out of high school.
* Committee member comment: The GE is unclear in the four-year plan (e.g. lists GE by numbers).
  + Todd Bitters created new drafts of the four-year plans with the appropriate GE categories.
* Committee member suggestion: It seems like there should be a higher level statistics or analytics course in the program. Reaching out to statistics may be beneficial to determine which courses are most appropriate.
* Committee member question: Are we teaching the history of gaming, the analysis of games, video games and cultures, and critiques for video games as a form in the most rigorous way possible? Are these topics addressed in a rigorous way in the major?
  + These topics are discussed in the first required course of the major.
* Committee member question: Who will evaluate the portfolios mentioned on page 44? Where will advising be housed?
  + It is unclear where the home of the program will be. This should be clarified in a revised proposal.
  + The financial impact of this program will be biggest on ASC, especially if Engineering, EHE, and other colleges are getting credit for the courses but ASC is paying for a director, advisor, and physical space for the program.
* Committee member question: Is there any indication how this will be received by the College of Engineering?
  + The College of Engineering, particularly CSE, is also concerned about the impact this program will have on their faculty.
* Committee member suggestion: May want to change the title of the program. It seems like it implies that is about playing games rather than the esports industry.
* Committee members should send their feedback on the program to Meg Daly by Sunday night. Meg will work with Steve Fink, Mary Ellen, and Todd Bitters to facilitate feedback.