



November 11, 2023

To the Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee;

On October 6, 2023 the Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee's Arts and Humanities Subcommittee 1 reviewed and approved a proposal from the Department of Design to develop a new major in Experiential Media Design.

As the culture of interactivity, games and animation continues to expand, there is a need for industry leaders to design new kinds of user experiences, storytelling and play through innovative and emerging creative practices. The Experiential Media Design major will be about integrating the domains of design, storytelling and technology within physical and virtual environments to create multisensory eco-systems.

The purpose of the undergraduate design education in Experiential Media Design (XMD) is to prepare designers in conceptualizing and constructing engaging and compelling user experiences through innovative, playful and collaborative creative media practices. Over the course of their studies, students will become adept at aligning the principles of design with the construction of immersive experiences that engage people. Students will learn to harness and apply the latest media technologies in ways that are uniquely tailored to the needs and requirements of each experience and its stakeholders.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts a 23% increase in employment for "digital designers" for the 2021-2031 job outlook. A 2019 PricewaterhouseCoopers report estimated that 23 million jobs will be enhanced by XR technologies by 2030. Glassdoor states the average base salary for VR/AR developers is \$88,472. In short, there is a growing market with well-paying jobs awaiting the graduates of this new design major.

The Department of Design has grown to include five faculty members with extensive expertise in the area of computer graphics and animation, game design, interaction design and extended reality (XR).

There are no design programs in our region directly offering this type of professional major, and the Department of Design are eager to have further means to distinguish their graduates to prospective employers, both regionally and nationally. Industries such as the gaming industry, and the interactive entertainment industry by and large, as well as cultural institutions with a mission to provide universal access to knowledge are in dire need of a new workforce educated in the design and development of interactive technologies.

We advance the proposal to create the new major in Experiential Media Design to the Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee with a motion to approve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Staley', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David J. Staley, PhD  
Associate Professor of History  
Chair, Arts and Humanities Subcommittee 1