UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
THE FACULTY SENATE

PROGRAM REVISION APPROVAL FORM

50 COPIES REQUIRED

PROGRAM TITLE: Studio Arts Program

PLEASE CHECK: GRADUATE ☐ UNDERGRADUATE ☒

DEPARTMENT: Art **HEAD/CHAIR: William T. Oedel**

SCHOOL OR COLLEGE: Humanities and Fine Arts **DEAN: Joel Martin**

Submission Date: September 10, 2007 **Proposed Starting Date: September 1, 2008**

I. PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT

A. Describe the Proposal.
The Proposal seeks to eliminate several courses and to move several others from experimental status to approved status. It leaves most of the current curriculum intact.

The Proposal includes the rationale under II, below, followed by appendices A-E. The appendices identify former and current disciplines, map the current curriculum, and at the same time make clear specifically those courses that will be retired, those that will be replaced, and those that will be added. The last appendix charts the sequencing of core courses within the disciplines, as well as recommended electives from among course offerings in the Studio Arts.

B. Provide a brief overview of the process for developing the Proposal.
The Proposal is the result of discussions held by the Curriculum Committee and members of the Studio Arts faculty over the span of the last five or six years. A majority of Studio faculty came to perceive that the existing requirements for undergraduate majors in Studio Arts no longer conformed to contemporary practice or most effectively marshaled the strengths and interests of current faculty and incoming students. Faculty introduced a series of experimental courses whose success demonstrated the efficacy of the new direction. The Curriculum Committee brought their findings before the Studio faculty, and a majority endorsed the proposal for revision of the Program.

II. PURPOSE AND GOALS

Describe the Proposal's purpose and the particular knowledge and skills to be acquired.

The program as revised places less emphasis on traditional studio skills and linear, vertical development within a single studio discipline (such as photography, painting, or ceramics); it places more emphasis on the theoretical and methodological issues that drive contemporary art-making and on crossovers among the disciplines that enable new forms. The new vision acknowledges that more and more artists today are not "just" painters or printmakers or sculptors, but are discovering new modes of expression that engage different media simultaneously. The boundaries between formerly distinct categories of knowledge are blurring and folding into one another. Artists explore and practice across disciplines, incorporating a wide range of media techniques to articulate their ideas. Thus, the proposed curriculum includes a new interdisciplinary plan of study that engages various media and a measure of horizontal learning, rather than exclusively vertical learning. This is not to say that the present curriculum has undergone a complete overhaul; the revision centers upon degrees of emphasis between depth and breadth, as well as greater flexibility for our majors to experiment with unfamiliar media and combinations of media.

A second major component of the proposed revision is the introduction of a range of courses in digital media and animation. These courses we propose to replace offerings in computer art and photography and digital imaging that we feel have become outmoded, especially as digital technologies have changed so dramatically in recent years. Most of the proposed new courses have run for several semesters as experimental courses and have proven immensely popular among students interested in digital time-based and still images, as well as animation and motion graphics.

In sum, we propose three new disciplines in Studio Arts for our undergraduates: Digital Media: Still Image; Digital Media: Time Based; and Interdisciplinary Studies. We believe that these expanded options will enhance the creative growth of our students and enable them to engage competitively with their peers at comparable institutions.