IUPUI GAC Reviewer Form

Documents Reviewed: Full Proposal by Herron School of Art for new MFA in Visual Art and Public Life: Photography and Intermedia

Summary of Proposal:

1. Are the goals clear and achievable?

Goals and objectives of this unique degree track are clear and concise. Authors have provided all information detailing the who, what, when, why and how of this degree. On page 6 of the document authors provide a sound rationale complete with data for why this track is needed in addition to existing tracks in Sculpture, Furniture Design and Printmaking. Clearly, a photography track is very popular not only at Herron School of Art, but nationally as well. The recruitment pool for this area is larger than all other MFA areas combined. Certainly this degree program track compliments the campus and departmental missions and the authors have created a clear, data driven, rationale for the creation of this MFA track.

2. Is the program academically sound?

The authors mention that Herron has been professionally accredited since 1952 by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD). All Herron MFA degree programs meet NASAD standards that include:

1) Studio Practice;

2) Academic studies concerned with visual media such as history, critical analysis, aesthetics, methodology and related humanities;

3) work in both studio and academic studies that fosters abilities to integrate knowledge and skills in the visual artsand to make connections and integrations with other fields appropriate to the individual's program of study.

As designed, the curriculum presented in this proposal meets all NASAD criteria above. The plan of study is somewhat confusing in some areas as it seems courses can be "repeated" for 0-3 credits. In the area of Appendix A titled "Second Year Course Work" it is advisable to provide an explanation for courses that are listed as 0-3 credits. These courses include:

HER R 539 Urban Art Context (if repeated) 0-3
HER H 560 Visual Culture: A Visual Studies Approach 0-3
Art History/or/Academic Elective 0-3

Other than these areas of confusion, the curriculum seems sequential, and courses seem appropriate.

3. Are faculty resources available to offer this certificate without undercutting other key missions of the unit?

Certainly Herron School of Art has the existing resources both human and monetary to offer this MFA degree track without "undercutting other key missions of the unit." As the proposal articulates, there are three existing tracks within the current MFA degree program, and this new track will compliment all three existing tracks. Additionally, only 4 new courses (HER K510—6 credits, HER K520 – 3 credits, HER K560 – 6 credits, and HER K530 – 2 credits) are necessary to complete this 60 credit hour MFA track. This means that 43 credit hours for this program already exist within the curriculum. The authors do an excellent job of providing a compelling course description/rationale, educational objectives, course content/description, textbooks and evaluation criteria for each course listed above.

4. Is there overlap, either real or potential, with any other unit that could harm the program or be exploited to help the program?

The only overlap that might be an issue would be with existing Informatics degree programs. While I am not familiar with all existing Informatics programs, I would think that Informatics does lots of "intermedia" work. The authors define "Intermedia" as "a graduate program concentrating in media that is based in photography, video, sound art, performance and other areas peripheral to these media....."
I would hope that there would be partnerships with existing programs in Informatics and various programs located in the Purdue School of Engineering and Technology including Computer Graphics and Design Technology. Too often schools do not think about commonalities within their disciplines and I would hope that an "Intermedia" program would also think about being "interdisciplinary" with other degree programs on campus. While I don't think the overlap between existing programs in Informatics and Engineering and Technology could cause harm, I am hopeful that there will be communication and cooperation between these schools.

5. My recommendation, comments/concerns regarding this proposal…

I recommend that the Full Proposal by Herron School of Art for new MFA in Visual Art and Public Life: Photography and Intermedia be approved.