

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**REQUEST FOR A PROGRAM NAME CHANGE AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY:
FROM BACHELOR OF DESIGN PROGRAM TO
BACHELOR OF ARTS PROGRAM IN INTERDISCIPLINARY DESIGN**

Action Requested: Consider recommending approval of the request by Iowa State University to change the name of the Bachelor of Design Program to the Bachelor of Arts Program in Interdisciplinary Design in the College of Design.

Executive Summary: The proposed program name change will meet the accreditation requirements of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD). This request has been reviewed by the Board Office and the Council of Provosts and is recommended for approval. This request addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan priority to pursue “educational excellence and impact” and Goal #8 – “Iowa’s public universities and special schools shall be increasingly efficient and effective.”

Background:

- ◇ **Description of program.** The current program and name, the Bachelor of Design, was approved as a new undergraduate program in the College of Design in 2011. The program is a 122.5 credit non-professional undergraduate degree program focused on the interdisciplinary nature of design and the power of the design studio as a place and method for generating ideas and solving problems. The core of the program is a series of forums and studios intended to connect history, theory and practice, and give students hands-on experience with design challenges that vary in complexity and scale. Thematic course modules are taught by faculty from multiple design disciplines.

The Bachelor of Design offers opportunities for students to engage design thinking in a collaborative and interdisciplinary environment. The curriculum developed out of a shared philosophy that designers have the capacity to generate ideas and think creatively about society's increasing economic, social and environmental challenges. Innovation and entrepreneurship are encouraged and valued. Graduates are prepared for a wide range of career paths and graduate programs. The curriculum allows students to pursue double majors to couple design thinking with other disciplines of interest, such as advertising, business, engineering, or journalism. Transfer students with an associate of arts or associate of science degree or the equivalent in academic transfer credit can complete the program in as few as four semesters.

- ◇ **Reason for proposed name change.** The proposed name change is in response to a 2012 peer review and subsequent study of the program by the accrediting agency, NASAD.¹ After the initial review generated concerns about the program title, the College of Design attempted to earn acceptance of the B.Des. title from NASAD. However, NASAD believes that the non-professional, generalist design curriculum is best suited to a Bachelor of Arts degree. In May 2015, NASAD indicated that the campus accreditation for all art and design programs were in jeopardy until the program name change occurred (Attachment A). The importance of NASAD accreditation to the College of Design has prompted the request for the program name change. NASAD has accepted this proposed name change.

¹ <http://nasad.arts-accredit.org/>

Retaining NASAD accreditation is critical to the continued success of the art and design programs, particularly because the College of Design has experienced flat student enrollment in the years that other colleges on campus have seen enrollment growth. NASAD accreditation gives the art and design programs greater visibility in their fields and assists in recruiting students regionally, nationally, and internationally. To earn accreditation, schools must participate in a rigorous written and campus peer review process that evaluates all programs with an art and/or design focus. NASAD accredits campuses, not individual degree programs, and programs cannot opt of this process.

In the College of Design, the programs that are subject to NASAD review include the Bachelor of Fine Arts, Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Industrial Design, Master of Fine Arts, Master of Arts, and Master of Industrial Design curricula in the Departments of Art and Visual Culture, Graphic Design, Interior Design, and Industrial Design. The Bachelor of Arts in Biological and Pre-medical Illustration, co-administered by the Colleges of Design and Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the Bachelor of Science in Apparel, Merchandising, and Design in the College of Human Sciences are also included. All of these programs have met the requirements for accreditation.

As a new program, the Bachelor of Design was included in the 2012 review, which was the first time that ISU had applied for NASAD accreditation. However, the B.Des. program was eligible only for "plan approval" because no students had graduated from the program. In the subsequent three years, students have graduated from the program. NASAD accreditation for the entire campus appears to be contingent upon resolving the program name issue. The proposed program name reflects the program's position in the College; it is not located within a single department. It is administered through the Design Studies Program under the leadership of the Associate Dean for Academic Programs. Faculty teach one or two 2-3 credit courses a year in the program, while also teaching in one of the home seven departments in the College of design. A program director from the Department of Architecture has a part-time appointment in the program.

- ◇ Comparable name at other institutions. When the program was created in 2011, there was extensive research about the degree title. The Bachelor of Design exists at several universities, most often embedded in a department. For example, the Bachelor of Design in Architecture at the University of Minnesota is a non-professional, four-year architectural studies curriculum offered by the Department of Architecture. When the degree title was selected in 2011, the College did not anticipate NASAD's objection because the accreditation process had not yet begun.

There are no similar programs in Iowa. The curriculum emphasizes design thinking skills, teamwork, and the application of design ideas and skills to real-world problems through studio design work, as well as research, writing, and debate. Its unique profile is one reason that the Bachelor of Design title was selected in 2011.

The Department of Arts at the University of Northern Iowa has a Bachelor of Arts Program in Art. Students choose an emphasis in studio, art history, art education, or graphic design. This program does not have the emphasis on design, design thinking or the interdisciplinary content. The School of Art and Art History at the University of Iowa offers a Bachelor of Arts Program in Studio Art and a Bachelor of Arts Program in Art History. The Bachelor of Arts Program in Studio Art does not have the emphasis on design, design thinking or the interdisciplinary content of ISU's program. The Bachelor of Arts Program in Art History is not studio based.

In the United States, the Bachelor of Design title and the type of curriculum offered is not common in colleges of art and design. The 2011 proposal to create the Bachelor of Design Program listed no other universities with an interdisciplinary Bachelor of Design curriculum that was similar to ISU's program. With the change to the proposed program name, the innovative curriculum will remain. However, more schools have degrees with the Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science title; this will require that marketing and online information emphasize the difference in the interdisciplinary design program from other bachelor of arts programs.

- ◇ Consistency with accreditation requirements. The proposed name change is in response to a review by the accrediting agency. NASAD has indicated that it will not give approval to the Bachelor of Design name unless the content is significantly changed. NASAD supports the curriculum and the learning goals and outcomes of the current program but requires that the degree title be changed to Bachelor of Arts for ISU to remain an accredited school.
- ◇ Relationship with existing programs. The College of Design has a program with the title, Bachelor of Arts Program in Art and Design. A name change proposal is under consideration to change the title to Bachelor of Arts Program in Art and Visual Culture, which will reflect the department's new name. Once approved, the College will have two Bachelor of Arts programs – Bachelor of Arts Program in Interdisciplinary Design (administered through Design Studies under the Associate Dean for Academic Programs, studio-based) and Bachelor of Arts Program in Art and Visual Culture (offered by the Department of Art and Visual Culture, non-studio-based).
- ◇ Effect on program configuration. There will be no curriculum changes associated with the proposed program name change.
- ◇ Effect on students. The Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Fine Arts, and professional undergraduate degrees like the Bachelor of Landscape Architecture, Bachelor of Architecture, and Bachelor of Industrial Design are more common degree titles in schools of art and design. Therefore, a change to a Bachelor of Arts degree gives students a more recognizable degree title and may help potential employers or graduate schools identify the type of courses and course distribution that the program requires.

Students are not likely to experience much disruption as a result of the program name change because their program of study will not change. Students enrolled in the Bachelor of Design Program will have the option to continue under that designation until the new program name is available in the university catalog.

- ◇ Effect on resources. There will be no costs associated with the name change. New brochures to advertise the new name will be needed. This is not an additional cost, but a recurring cost for all programs in the College.

- ◇ Proposed name consistent with College mission. The proposed name is consistent with the university mission to “create, share, and apply knowledge to make Iowa and the world a better place.” The program is unusual in the College of Design because it expands access to design careers for populations that have historically been underrepresented, including first-generation, non-traditional, and transfer students. It has helped to stabilize college-wide enrollment by providing a studio-based option for students who do not select an undergraduate professional degree. In the past, they may have switched to a major outside of the College or left the university.

The open enrollment for the program differs from most of the professional programs in the College that limit enrollment through an enrollment management process. The Bachelor of Design program is transfer-friendly and fits with the “2+2” model for students with an associate of arts or associate of science degree from a community college or the equivalent in academic transfer credit from another institution. The open enrollment and transfer-friendly policies hasten time to graduation for many students who choose the Bachelor of Design program compared to how their transfer or non-major credit would apply to the requirements in one of the professional degree options. These benefits will not change with the name change.

- ◇ Workforce needs of the state. The workforce needs remain similar to those identified when the program was created. The name change will not affect post-graduation prospects for students. Approximately 30% of the graduates choose to attend graduate school for a professional degree in a design field. Others are working in design-related fields, including web design, corporate branding, interactive media, digital printing and publishing, photography, and design services.
- ◇ Date of implementation. The proposed name change will become effective upon approval by the Board of Regents and will be included in the University’s General Catalog. The anticipated implementation date is Fall 2016.



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COMMISSION ACTION REPORT

This document provides the official action of the Commission as indicated in the cover letter of the same date.

May 26, 2015

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
College of Design
College of Human Sciences
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Actions:

1. The Commission voted to continue to defer action on the application for Plan Approval for the degree, Bachelor of Arts-4 years: Interdisciplinary Design pending Response to the concern listed below.

Item for Response:

The Commission requests confirmation of approval by the institution's Board of Regents of the new title, Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Design. Should this information be available in advance of the due date noted below, the Commission may consider the information through early action (see Response to Commission Action Report of June 3, 2014, page 1; Response to Commission Action Report of November 8, 2013; Commission Action Report of May 21, 2013; Optional Response, page 1; Application for Plan Approval, page 2).

Due Date for Response:

March 1 for consideration at the Commission meetings of April 2016.

The *Procedures for Submitting Responses and Progress Reports* may be downloaded from the NASAD website at <http://nasad.arts-accredit.org> (see "Publications" and beneath that, "Accreditation Procedures").

Note:

The Commission recognizes that the institution is working diligently to fulfill its educational and artistic purposes, and that it is endeavoring to address and respond to the issues raised by the Commission. At this time, as a matter of procedure, the Commission asks the institution to review the policy in the NASAD Rules of Practice and Procedure regarding continuous deferrals (see NASAD Handbook, Rules of Practice and Procedure, Part II, Article IV, Section 3). The next consideration of the institution's Response will be the third consideration of the application.



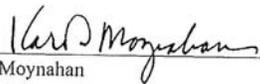
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2. The Commission voted to grant Final Approval for Listing for the following degrees:

Bachelor of Industrial Design-4 years.
Master of Industrial Design-3 years.

Commendation:

The Commission commends the institution for aligning the title, Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Design, with a more accurate description of its content as well as progress made to retitle a course in the Department of Art and Visual Culture to provide enhanced clarity to students.



Karen P. Moynahan
Executive Director

KPM:ac