

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**REQUEST FOR A PROGRAM NAME CHANGE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA:
FROM BACHELOR OF ARTS PROGRAM IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA TO
BACHELOR OF ARTS PROGRAM IN DIGITAL MEDIA**

Action Requested: Consider recommending approval of the request by the University of Northern Iowa to change the name of the Bachelor of Arts Program in Electronic Media to the Bachelor of Arts Program in Digital Media in the College of Humanities, Arts, and Sciences.

Executive Summary: The proposed program name change will reflect evolving communication technologies. 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 “ensure access to education and student success.”

Background:

- ◇ **Description of program.** The Electronic Media program in the Department of Communication Studies prepares students for careers in radio, television, film, broadcast journalism, mass communication, digital media, and related fields. The program began as “Radio” in 1943, later changing to “Radio-TV” and “Broadcasting.” In 1994, the program was renamed “Electronic Media” to reflect changes in mass communication technology, including cable and satellite. Currently, the program has three electronic media emphases – digital journalism; digital media industry leadership; and digital media production.
- ◇ **Reason for proposed name change.** The proposed name addresses several factors:
 - ⇒ It reflects the continued trajectory of the program adapting to new mass communication technologies, including the recent digital convergence of the Internet.
 - ⇒ It reflects the digital media focus in production and theory that are currently being taught in the program.
- ◇ **Comparable name at other institutions.** UNI’s Interactive Digital Studies Program does not duplicate the existing Electronic Media Program (or the proposed Digital Media Program). Drake University renamed its Electronic Media program as a Digital Media Production program in Fall 2015. The University of Iowa offers a Media Studies specialization in Communication Studies; however, it is theoretical in nature, with no digital production component. The Journalism and Mass Communication major at the University of Iowa and at Iowa State University focuses primarily on reporting and writing.
- ◇ **Consistency with accreditation requirements.** This program is not accredited with an external agency.
- ◇ **Effect on program configuration.** The number of credit hours and the curricular requirements will remain the same. The number of credit hours for the major was reduced in Fall 2016 from 55 to 49. This change resulted from a recommendation during the 2013-2014 Academic Program Review which stated “Consider improving the current program and title to reflect potential innovation and change in the curriculum and the evolution of the media/communications industry.” The number of major credit hour requirements is more in line with other majors in the Department of Communication Studies.

- ◇ Effect on students. Students will be advised through changes in course titles and numbers as the program name change is implemented. .
- ◇ Effect on resources. There are few if any anticipated costs resulting from changing the program name. Web-based program materials will be changed at no expense. Updates to printed materials will be made on the same regular schedule. Facilities have been updated on a regular equipment replacement schedule. Faculty costs are unchanged.
- ◇ Proposed name consistent with College mission. The primary goal of the College of Humanities, Arts and Science is to “develop and maintain excellence in departments, programs, and centers within the College.” UNI’s vision is for the university to “be nationally known for innovative education, preparing students for success in a rapidly changing, globally competitive, and culturally diverse world.” The program name change will maintain excellence in the program and will provide the needed innovation to offer successful programs in a rapidly changing world.
- ◇ Workforce needs. The Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook (2016) lists relevant positions for Digital Media graduates:

Position	Median Pay	Job Outlook, 2014-2024
Film and video editors and camera operators	\$55,740	11% faster than average
Multimedia artists and animators	\$63,970	6% as fast as average
Sales managers	\$113,860	5% as fast as average
Reporters, correspondents, and broadcast news analysts	\$37,720	-9% decline
Producers and directors	\$68,440	9% faster than average

In the Department of Communication Studies, undergraduate program graduates had a 94% placement rate. They were either employed or were continuing their education in graduate school (*2015 UNI Career Services Report*).

- ◇ Date of implementation. The proposed program 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 Spring 2017.